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MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE

*A Biography*



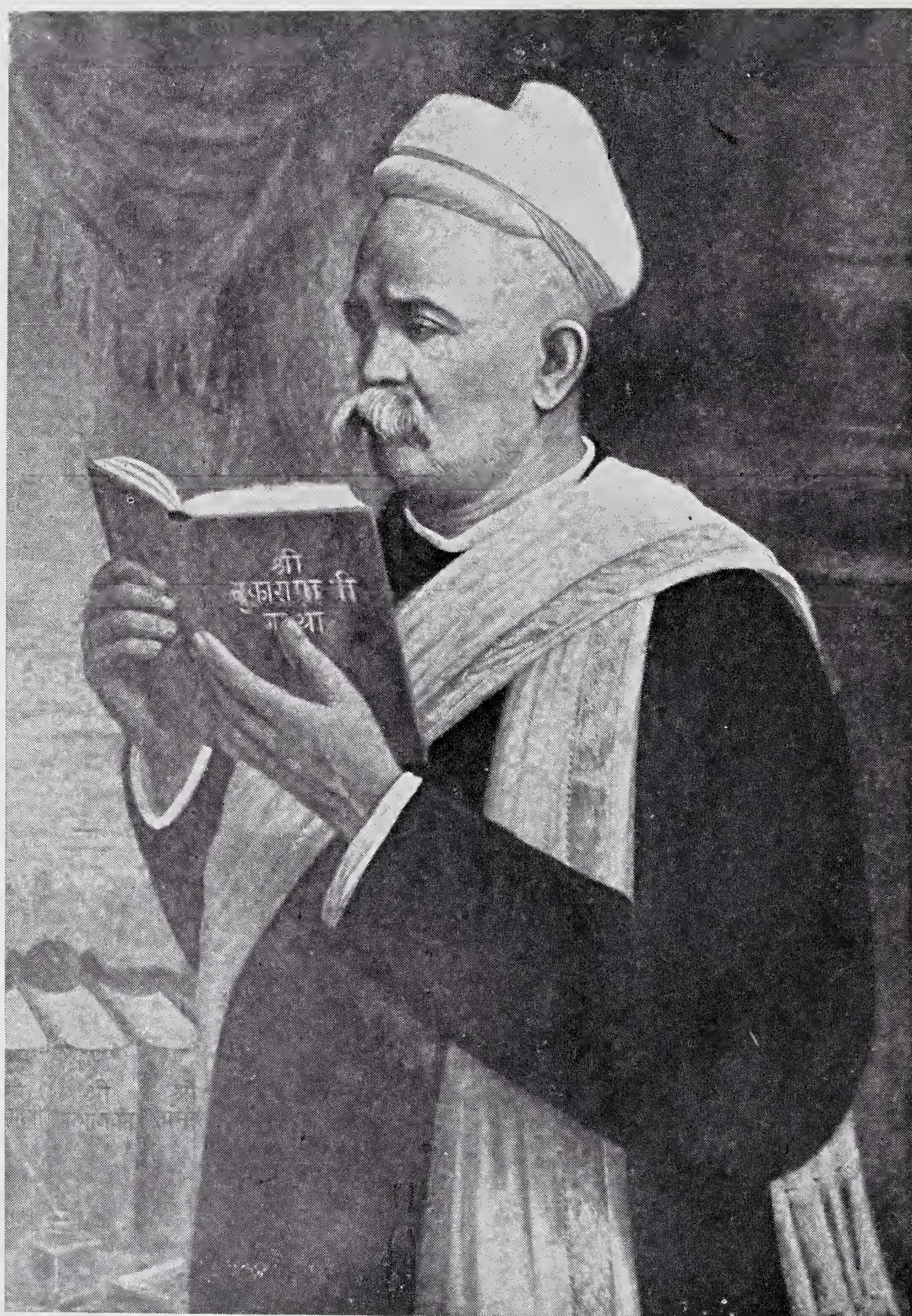
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MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE

*Reproduction of an oil painting in Brahman Sabha Hall, Bombay*



MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE  
*A Biography*

T. V. PARVATE  
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Jan. 10, 1968





## FOREWORD

MANY NOTABLE Judges have sat on the Bench of the Bombay High Court. Justice Ranade was one of the most notable. In the domain of law he was pre-eminent. He was an erudite Judge who made a marked contribution to the development and elucidation of Hindu Law. But although to succeeding generations he will be known as a great Judge, he was not merely a Judge ; he was much more than that. He did not believe in living in the ivory tower of judicial detachment. Every minute of his life he was conscious of " the felt necessities of the times ". He knew the problems of his people, their hardships and sufferings, their dreams and aspirations and the measures that should be taken to bring the realisation of those dreams and aspirations nearer. It has been said that destiny is character. It is not our stars that predestine our future but the character that we build up. And it is often in the student and the young man that we catch glimpses of future greatness.

He was undoubtedly, as Mr. Parvate calls him, an uncommon child. He was a student of the Elphinstone College and one of the first Masters of Arts of the Bombay University. He was a favourite student of Dr. Harkness and Sir Alexander Grant, Principals of the Elphinstone College. A very great compliment was paid to him when one of his professors said of him that he was the only student of the College who could think. I believe, that perhaps sums up the whole of his life. Throughout his life he never gave in to emotions, sentiments, prejudices or passions. He possessed the greatest asset any human being can possess — intellectual integrity — and his whole work was transfused by the high intellectual quality of clear and rational thinking.

Although he was enrolled as an advocate he never practised in the Courts. He joined Government service and worked as a Magistrate, Small Cause Court Judge and Civil Judge (Sub-Judge as the post was then known). Therefore he rose to the High Court Bench from the ranks through sheer merit. He did not belong to the aristocracy of Judges who came to the Bench after a long and successful practice at the Bar or to the direct recruits from the Bar to Assistant or District Judgeships. His achievement on the High Court Bench and outside is all the more creditable. To use

a military expression, he won his marshal's baton after serving as a soldier — not after having all the advantages that a Sandhurst-trained officer has.

The versatility of Ranade was amazing. Even while he was a Government servant, and also when he was on the Bench, he was interested in politics, education, history, economics and social reform. And his interest was not that of a mere dilettante. He was a historian who gave a proper place to the Mahratta Empire in the context of Indian history. He was a pragmatic economist who refused to apply Western nostrums to Indian conditions. He was a pioneer who visualised a Welfare State and the importance of industrialisation in a poor and underdeveloped country.

In the present times when linguism has raised its dangerous head it is well to remember that he advocated the importance and value of the English language. While not decrying our historic legacy he refused to shut the window against the wind of change and modernism.

But his greatest quality was that he was the maker of great men. Being great himself, by his influence and example he inspired men to follow his foot-steps. He had a large number of brilliant associates — the greatest of whom was Gokhale. I think it was Napoleon who once said that it was not enough to be great yourself. You must have the talent to find the right type of people in the country and inspire them to do great things.

But perhaps his greatest creation was his wife Ramabai. Illiterate, backward, shy, he made of her a fit companion for himself. And when he died she proved worthy of him and in widow's weeds she associated herself with many movements of social reform, principally the education and emancipation of women.

Mr. Parvate has written a fascinating biography of a great Judge, a great historian, economist and social reformer. It should be read by all who are interested in the early beginnings of the great adventure on which we are now launched. It should be an object lesson to those who think that one job—whether that of a Government servant or of a High Court Judge—is enough for any man. Ranade proved that it is not. Outside one's official duties and without any prejudice to those duties, there are so many causes which claim the time and devotion of every one whom God has gifted with intelligence and capacity for work.

M. C. CHAGLA



## P R E F A C E

READERS OF my biographies of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Krishna Gokhale almost took it for granted that I would, in course of time, attempt one of Ranade also. Some reviewers of these two books anticipated or suggested that I should do so. Since I had made up my mind to put my hands to the task of writing Ranade's biography while I was in the midst of Gokhale's, I was happy to discover this telepathy between me and my readers.

This was an encouraging circumstance, but when I set to work, I found that Ranade was somewhat of an elusive subject, that a good deal of reading about him and of his writings would occupy much time and that a quick and firm grasp of all that he spoke, wrote and did was by no means as easy as I had fancied. But I refused to be depressed, the aids necessary for my purpose having been made available to me by kind friends and patrons like Professors N. R. Phatak, P. M. Limaye and D. G. Karve. The result is that after nearly two years of constant application and patient labour during my leisure, I have been able to produce a study that, I hope, will not be found disappointing by those who want to make an initial but serious acquaintance with Ranade.

My own plea for attempting this work is quite modest. Ranade, Tilak and Gokhale are universally recognised as the most prominent makers of modern Maharashtra. Indeed, it is an understatement of what I want to say. They are in the front rank of the makers of modern India. A treatment of their achievements by a single person, however inadequate it might be, has a value all its own, for at least a novice. He would get a co-ordinated, synthesised view of this trio, whose contacts and conflicts were as intimate as they were incessant, the area of agreement always being much larger than the area of difference. Readers of these three volumes would find how they were complementary to one another in their service to India.

This book has been planned on much the same lines as the previous two volumes on Tilak and Gokhale. Various aspects of Ranade's career have been treated separately though not in strict chronological order. Since Ranade's views on all matters he dealt with during his public career of nearly 40 years were fairly firm,

there was no question of following anything like their evolution. Yet his versatility was bewildering. I must admit that I had some difficulty in following his theological tracts and discourses and I am not sure that my treatment in this behalf is either adequate and fair to Ranade or satisfying to the reader.

Prof. N. R. Phatak did me the favour of reading the complete manuscript. Prof. P. M. Limaye intended to do the same, but his rather unexpectedly sudden death interposed between intent and action. I am much grieved to have to record it here. He had, however, read more than half of the manuscript and encouraged me to go to the end of it. Prof. D. G. Karve was kind enough to read the chapter, "Father of Indian Economics". Principal T. K. Tope, of the Government Law College, Bombay, made the services of his young colleague, Mr. P. K. Pandit, available for getting correct quotations from some of Ranade's judgments from the *Law Reporter*. Prof. S. M. Vidwans furnished complete information regarding Ramabai's work after her husband's death.

Mr. R. M. Humane would not relinquish his monopoly of preparing indices of my books. Help, co-operation and encouragement from my wife, Girija, cannot be over-estimated though she does not like any reference being made to her. To all these persons I am greatly obliged. I am also grateful to the authors of the many books I have consulted. They are mentioned in the bibliography.

T. V. PARVATE



## EPIGRAPH

मानुष्ये सति दुर्लभा पुरुषता पुंस्त्वे पुनर्विप्रता ।  
विप्रत्वे बहुविद्यताऽतिगुणताविद्यावतोऽर्थज्ञता ॥  
अर्थज्ञस्य विचित्रवाक्यपटुता तत्रापि लोकज्ञता ।  
लोकज्ञस्य समस्तशास्त्रविदुषो धर्मे मतिर्दुर्लभा ॥

Human birth may not necessarily be as a male and that too as a Brahmin. Even if one is born a Brahmin, he may not be very learned and also endowed with excellent merits. Even then he may not grasp the deep significance of affairs or he may be ignorant of the science of economics. If he possesses all these attributes, he may lack the talent or skill for exposition with beauty and variety of phrase and even if he is lucky enough to have mastery over style and idiom, he may not have access to the popular mind or he may not know how to get into their skins. Granting that such a rare scholar, proficient in all sciences, lives on this planet, he may not be religiously minded or he may not be alive to his duties and responsibilities. In the case of Ranade, however, all these requirements are more than fulfilled so as to satisfy the anonymous, exacting poet.





## UNCOMMON CHILD

LIKE A number of families of Chitpavan Brahmins from the coastal districts of Kolaba and Ratnagiri, Ranade's family also migrated to a village called Karkamb in Sholapur District in search of better luck. This happened about the time the Peshwa rule became extinct in Maharashtra. The original place of the Ranades was a village called Mobhar Pacheri, in Chiplun taluka of Ratnagiri District. Ranade's great-great-grandfather was known as Bhagwantrao and remembered as an astrologer and a man of great piety. His son Bhaskarrao appears to have been a man of ambition. He came to the notice of the Patwardhan Sardars holding sway over the area around Pandharpur. He slowly rose in their service as a soldier of fortune to begin with and later even in civil service by representing the Sangli Patwardhans at the court of the East India Company's administration in the Deccan.

Bhaskarrao's eldest son, Amritrao, grandfather of Ranade, took up employment under the British and rose to be a Mamlatdar. Ranade's father, Govindrao, was the second of his four sons. He was an ordinary clerk in the office of the Deputy Collector of Ahmednagar drawing only Rs. 35 per month. Although this is no indication of any affluent circumstances of the family, it was not penury either, considering the fact that Ranade's grandfather was a Mamlatdar and his father had fair chances of becoming one at no distant date. He was posted at Niphad in Nasik District as Phadnavis or head clerk to the Mamlatdar of Niphad when Ranade was born. It was on Tuesday, January 18, 1842, at sunset. Within three years of Ranade's birth, Govindrao's superiors recommended him for a responsible post in the office of the Karbhari of Kolhapur. So Govindrao resigned from British service and entered the service of Kolhapur State. He left his family at Niphad and went alone to Kolhapur to take charge of his new office.

It was not easy to move about then. The British power had yet to establish itself firmly in Maharashtra and even the ordinary amenities like roads, railways and telegraph were yet to come. It was not easy, therefore, to move from Niphad to Kolhapur with a pregnant wife and a child of less than three years. But after Durga, the new-born daughter, was about six months old, Gopikabai started for Kolhapur with her two children, accompanied by a brother-in-law known as Vithukaka Ranade. The travelling was by bullock-cart and the distance was not less than 300 miles. The track lay through hills and jungles and a couple of mountain passes. The practice, therefore, was to take rest by day and travel by night. About 25 miles a day was the maximum distance that could be covered and so it was presumed that about three weeks or even a month would be required to reach Kolhapur.

As the travellers were proceeding in the direction of Kolhapur, one cold night, every one of the party fell fast asleep. Inmates of the bullock-cart were the driver, a peon, Ranade's mother, Ranade and his baby sister. His uncle was on horseback at a short distance, when the cart ran fast down a descent. Amidst the jerks and jolts it gave, Ranade who was well wrapped up in a blanket slipped down in the dust. Apparently he was very fast asleep, because he raised no alarm and the cart went off. He was awake a few minutes afterwards, when his uncle Vithukaka approached him. Ranade quitely called him out and said that he had fallen out of the cart. He was still bundled up and shivering with cold but showed not the least sign of fright.

Ranade's uncle, Vithukaka, was scarcely prepared for such an announcement. He got down his mount and lifting up the child in his arms exclaimed, " Good Gracious God ". He placed Ranade in front of him on horseback and the horse galloped near the cart in a short while. He called out to his sister-in-law and asked her if everything was alright. She was half-asleep and said yes. He asked her to make sure and she found to her dismay that her son was missing. Vithukaka did not try her motherly impatience and anxiety for long and handed Ranade over to her. The mother's joy at the restoration of the only son knew no bounds. Whenever this incident used to be related in the family circles by the uncle, he could not help being overwhelmed by emotion and having a lump in his throat and tears in his eyes. Needless to say that the mother's experience was similar,



One cannot help feeling what a disaster it would have been had something untoward happened to Ranade in this accident. The illustrious career of one who became a prophet of liberated India and a maker and moulder of many a man and many an institution in the cause of the liberation of India's manhood and womanhood, might have been cut short so cruelly by an ungracious fate. Ranade's mother had given birth to a number of children but only Madhao and Durga survived her and so the poignance of her feeling at the restoration of her son had better be imagined than described. Ranade was christened Madhao but somehow or other Mahadeo became current as his name and that stuck to him throughout life. While Madhao is one of Vishnu's names, Mahadeo is that of Shankara. But apparently his parents had never forgotten his real name for his wives (senior and junior) were named Rama and not Uma. Rama indicates Goddess Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, and Uma indicates Parvati, the consort of Shankara.

Ranade's father also had survived a crisis in his life by the time Ranade went to live with him at Kolhapur. A British political agent was then administering Kolhapur State and there was no properly installed ruler on the Kolhapur *Gadi*. It was a regency administration. The British had appointed men who had their confidence in all key posts and old Sardars and Courtiers were neglected. This caused much discontent and led to an armed revolt. The rebels could not look kindly upon those who were agents of the British, the most prominent among whom was the Karbhari, Daji Krishna Pandit. He was once placed under arrest by the rebels and kept in captivity for some days. The British soon put down this insurrection ruthlessly and Ranade's father, Govindrao, narrowly escaped the fate of the Karbhari.

After this trouble was quelled, Kolhapur witnessed a number of reforms. Nana Moroji Trilokekar, an enlightened gentleman from Bombay, functioned as head clerk in the office of the Political Agent. He made efforts to introduce the reforms then in vogue in British territory. A Marathi school was founded in 1848 and an English school was started in 1853. It is now known as Rajaram High School which developed further into Rajaram College. Nana Moroji also founded a newspaper and helped in promoting a monthly periodical which Krishnaji Chafaji, headmaster of the High School, conducted. In 1854, a telegraph office was opened at Kolhapur and metalled roads began to be built as in British territory.

Ranade soon became conversant with reading, writing and arithmetic and in 1853 he began to learn English. He completed education of roughly the Matriculation standard by the end of 1856, when he began to entertain ideas about going to Bombay for further studies. He was a very diligent and eager student. He wanted to learn everything that could be learnt and that perfectly. For companions, Ranade had the children of the Kirtane family. Janardan Hari Kirtane was a self-made and capable person, who succeeded Daji Krishna Pandit as the Karbhari of Kolhapur. The Ranades and the Kirtanes shared a big house in Kolhapur. His eldest son Vinayak was of Ranade's age. As Ranade rose in life, Vinayak Kirtane also did, becoming Naib Dewan and Dewan of Baroda and Indore in later life. His son later became an author of a good sketch of Ranade published in the *Indian Worthies* series. Both of them were known for their feats of memory but one of their teachers critically observed that Ranade's memory was retentive while Kirtane's was less so. The former took more time to grasp a point but held it firmly once he grasped it while the latter grasped a thing quickly but lost his grip on it very soon.

As a child Ranade did not easily impress anyone as clever or smart. He was in no sense handsome. But he was healthy and well built. A strong physique and impressive height were traditional characteristics of all Ranades. Until he was about 12 years of age his pronunciation was defective. For gutturals he articulated palatals and his devout mother was much perplexed on this score. But suddenly one day while performing his evening prayer, he pronounced all letters correctly and the anxious mother felt relieved. He was a close-lipped child and making him give up his taciturnity was a job. It seems as if he considered prattling as waste of energy. Even when he passed his school examinations, he would not convey the news home with any particular rejoicing. When questioned about it, he used to say there was nothing much in it. Since he was studying hard and learning his lessons well, success in the examinations was only consequential. The Kirtane children and even Ranade's sister presented a complete contrast to him. They were talkative, smart and prepossessing. By their side, Ranade was almost unimpressive and so cut a poor figure and caused some anxiety to his parents about his future. His mother often unburdened herself by exclaiming whether he would be able to earn Rs. 10 a month and maintain his wife !



What were considered as his defects in his childhood proved to be his merits as a grown-up man. He had a one-track mind. He would not swerve from a beaten track. His simplicity often amounted to awkwardness and he was frequently looked upon as an eccentric boy. He never cared if people ridiculed him. He was always above it. When he was reading at the Marathi school, it was the practice in the household to serve him bread and to dress it with liquid ghee after he returned from school. Once solid ghee was served. He did not find it agreeable. He insisted that he must have liquid ghee and that too from the same little jar that contained it. Exasperated, his mother put a little hot water in the jar and served it on his bread. He did not complain. He quietly had his grub and went about his work. His sister who was watching this deception on him from a little distance twitted him over it and laughed at his credulity, but he did not care a fig for it.

It was a practice of the Ranades and Kirtanes to engage in a game of dice every year on the *Kojagari Purnima* day. One year the Kirtane family happened to be away on that day and little Durga was asleep when Ranade wanted to have a game of dice as the hardy annual. There was nobody to play with him. He did not feel discouraged. He regarded a pillar in front of him as his companion and started the game. He gave his right hand to the pillar and reserved the left hand for himself. As he was better used to throw the dice by the right hand and that hand was lent to his opponent, the pillar, victory was assured to the pillar. But once the arrangement was fixed he did not mind the defeat of a human being by a wooden post ! His aunt chaffed him for his credulity but he did not see any disgrace in it. His aunt failed to irritate him. This is how we notice an inherent sense of rectitude and fairness in his mental composition even as a child.

Yet another example of this kind may be added. Once his mother placed two slices of his favourite sweet on his palm and asked him to give one to a servant boy of his age who was standing near and take the other for himself. His mother intended that he should take the bigger one for himself and hand over the smaller one to the servant boy. But while asking him to do that she had given a wrong direction. Ranade implicitly followed the direction as it was given and his mother wondered how he could be so foolish, even if she had made a mistake.

The utter simplicity of his nature could be further studied by some

other anecdotes of his behaviour as a child. It was his mother's practice to deck him with gold bracelets, a gold necklace and a gold ring on festive occasions. He seemed to hate this bedecking. He would push up the bracelets so that his shirt sleeve concealed them. He would so take up his upper cloth that his necklace was wholly covered and he would so turn the ring round his finger that as little of it as possible could be seen. If anybody got annoyed with this behaviour and asked him about it, he would say : why are these things given to me? The Brahmin boys who beg food from us every day do not wear such things even on festive occasions. Then why should I do so?

Many children might have been perplexed in this way in their childhood. But he retained the trait and the seeds of such noble sentiments as love of justice, compassion for all, belief in human equality, a spirit of rectitude and sympathy for fellow beings—took strong roots in his mind and they flowered and reached fruition in the development of his personality and therein lies his greatness and his goodness. In the case of most children the seeds are, as it were, sown on a rocky surface. Ranade's great patriotism, humanity, piety, learning, industry and integrity and, may be, even his so called shortcomings, stemmed from these traits as perceived in him as a child.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale and the late Rao Bahadur Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi were perhaps the most intimate associates of Ranade's contemporaries and so followed best the workings of his mind. Their characterisation of Ranade may, therefore, be regarded as the most trustworthy and dependable. Joshi said, "With him (Ranade) life was a duty—a holy gift of God—to be religiously employed in his service. He was one of the most religious of men and what most struck and impressed me during my association with him was his simple, exalted and fervent piety. He always seemed to feel that he was in the presence of the Almighty, a humble servant doing his appointed task as best as he could and with the light of faith that was vouchsafed to him." Gokhale said, "He (Ranade) was one of those men who appear from time to time in different countries and on different occasions to serve as a light to guide the footsteps of our weak and erring humanity." In his preface contributed to Mrs. Ramabai Ranade's book of her reminiscences in Marathi, Gokhale stood testimony to his master's righteousness and piety and spoke of him as an inspired person,



as an incarnation of the Supreme Being and observed that born two or three centuries ago he might have been reckoned among the saints of Maharashtra like Ekanath and Tukaram.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak's estimate may also be pertinently quoted, because, the general belief even to this day is that Tilak came to prominent public notice first as an opponent of Ranade and though essentially his disciple, he often questioned his wisdom and once or twice very severely criticised him. But his over-all view of Ranade was given in the obituary of Ranade he wrote in the *Kesari* in which he compared him to Swami Vidyaranya and called him 'the omniscient Madhava'. In another passage Tilak said :

“The first characteristic of Ranade was that he believed in an all-sided and not lop-sided development of the nation. He was endowed with a mature and comprehensive intellect which examined all aspects of any question and reached correct conclusions. He was clearly of the opinion that we are backward in every way — religiously, socially, industrially, educationally, politically and unless we improved in all these respects we would not come in line with the civilised nations. Night and day, he was engrossed in active work connected with the improvement of our condition in one or other or several of these fields. It was not only Maharashtra that occupied his mind, though that was his immediate arena of activity, but the whole of India. He was fully conscious that every Indian who had the equipment of western education had this public responsibility and he set an ideal example by his own efforts for 30 years for all to follow.

“It is wholly erroneous to suppose that Ranade could achieve all this with comfort and ease. No. His course of action was fraught with dangers and difficulties and Government knew full well that if anybody was educating the people in Maharashtra to work for public weal and agitate for redress of public grievances it was Ranade. It was not for nothing that he was transferred from Poona to Nasik and from there to Dhulia. Why, it was even strongly held during the governorship of Sir Richard Temple that the Sarvajanic Sabha which he promoted and of which he was the soul, was a seditious body. Ranade pushed through all these troublous times with calm courage and amazing equanimity of mind. Any one of lesser grit and pluck would have been broken and would have succumbed. Quiet courage was his

most extraordinary quality and that is why his ceaseless industry was crowned with success in Bombay Presidency in the form of great popular awakening. One has only to think of other parts of the country where a man like Ranade was not born. If there is some pushfulness in the public life of Maharashtra and if its publicists are fearlessly expressing themselves on matters of public interest, there can be no manner of doubt that it is the result of Ranade's ceaseless and painstaking work for over 25 years.

“ If Ranade's great intellectual and moral attainments could not be harnessed by the British Government to a greater purpose than work as a judge of the Bombay High Court, that is no fault of his. It is the fault of the system of administration. Had he lived a few years more, there was a fair prospect of his openly pursuing the activities he had initiated in the way Dadabhai and Hume had done but that was not ordained by the Almighty. Otherwise why should we have been compelled to write his obituary instead of organising a golden jubilee celebration? ”

Ranade was born on January 18, 1842, and died on January 16, 1901. The last sentence in the passage above was, therefore, quite apt. The whole article is a free and full-throated appreciation of Ranade's services and an unstinted tribute offered in a spirit of humility which was not a very conspicuous trait of Tilak, at any rate in those days. One of the sentences in the article is that such a person has not seen the light of day since the advent of the British Raj. Indeed, the whole obituary is worth perusal by any one who wants to make a proper estimate of Ranade. It is no formal, conventional obituary writing and has a clear ring of sincerity and genuineness about it.



## II

### DEVOUT STUDENT AND EXEMPLARY TEACHER

THE CHILDREN of the Ranade-Kirtane household, that is to say, the boys among them, had completed the course of Marathi and English education that was then possible to complete at Kolhapur and as was found out when they were sent to Bombay for further education, they had nearly reached the Matriculation standard. Sending them to Bombay was not quite easy. They had to travel the whole distance by bullock-carts, proper lodging accommodation had to be found for them in Bombay, arrangements to look after their food and guardianship had to be made and naturally it took some time for all this to happen although the boys were very eager to pursue their studies in Bombay.

As far as Ranade was concerned, there was an additional hurdle to be crossed. His mother was most reluctant to send him away from her. She was also opposed to English education being given to him. When Nana Moroji started English classes at Kolhapur, he had to go from house to house and persuade parents and guardians to see the benefits of learning English and send their wards to school to learn the language of the new rulers. The belief was abroad that after learning English, boys became irreligious and ungodly, that they often became converts to Christianity and in any case were alienated from their own culture and way of living. Like many other parents Govindrao had agreed to send Ranade to the English school, but when Gopikabai, Ranade's mother, learnt about it, she prohibited him from going to school. After three days, Nana Moroji reported Ranade's absence to Govindrao and he had great difficulty in inducing his wife to agree to allow Ranade to go to the English school. So when the question of sending him to Bombay cropped up, she would have simply vetoed it had she been alive.

Shortly after this, Gopikabai died as a consequence of her last and difficult child-birth. As would seem extraordinary now, Ranade's father married another wife within 16 days of the death of Gopikabai. His sister also was married off while yet a girl of nine or ten and at the age of 13, Ranade also was married to a girl of nine, Sakhubai by name. She came from a family of Wai known as Dandekars, her father's name being Moropant. According to Mrs. Ramabai's account Ranade began to learn English with the Kirtane boys at the age of 12 in 1853, after his mother's death. At the end of 1856 the question of sending Ranade and others to Bombay was on the anvil. For Mr. Janardan Vinayak Kirtane appears to have spoken to Col. Reaves, Political Agent at Kolhapur about his and Govindrao Ranade's intention to send their wards to Bombay and he is recorded to have expressed appreciation of the idea and recommended Dr. Wilson's School for them.

By the beginning of 1857, the boys were in Bombay. Ranade's father had left a Brahmin cook and a Maratha bearer at his disposal and from all accounts, he was very well looked after. His companions were the four Kirtane boys Vinayak, Balvant, Nilkanth and Trimbak. The faithful cook and the bearer acted as their guardians. All the boys were between 10 and 14 years of age and seem to have fully benefited from the freedom and opportunities they had at such a distance from their parents. Many of their contemporaries had to go through numerous and varied difficulties while pursuing their education, but these boys were lucky in that they had well-to-do guardians. To their credit and particularly to the credit of Ranade, it must be said that these opportunities were put to the best use. Indeed, he taxed himself so seriously and with such single-mindedness that a permanent defective eyesight was the result of his over-exertion. He became the proverbial bookworm.

How devoted he was to his lessons and books, whether those prescribed for study or others, was once described by the late Sir Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar while paying Ranade a tribute at a congregation in the Prarthana Samaj. Sir Ramakrishna said, "I became acquainted with Ranade after he joined the Elphinstone Institute somewhere at the beginning of 1857. We stayed in the same chawl in the Fanaswadi locality. He never wasted his time in gossip with his companions. He never became very intimate with anybody, nor did he ever seek any introductions. He was absorbed in reading, day and night. There were no well-defined examinations



in those days — they have spoilt all real application to learning now-a-days. He was often seen burning midnight oil in his cabin, buried in reading quite big books like Gibbon's *History of Rome*." This trait of his was observed even at Kolhapur when he was learning his alphabets and simple multiplication tables. He used to disfigure the walls of his house with his scribbling and inscribe letters and figures in the dust even while at play with his schoolmates. What looked like ridiculous overdoing was really an index of his consuming devotion and total absorption.

Within a year of his entering the Elphinstone Institution with his companions, he was allowed to join the Elphinstone College in 1858. The University of Bombay was formally inaugurated in 1857 but it had not yet taken proper shape and it took some time for the first Matriculation examination to be held in 1859. Ranade was required to appear for this examination even though he was already in college. Only 21 students appeared for this examination for the first time. Ramakrishna Bhandarkar, Bal Mangesh Waglay, Vaman Abaji Modak and others were among them. While in the Elphinstone Institute, its Principal Kaikhushru Hormusji Alpaiwala formed an excellent impression about him. His assessment and appraisal of Ranade was, "This is an uncommon lad and he is destined to attain great distinction". In the college Sir Alexander Grant, the Principal, felt about him the same way. Besides Grant, Harkness, Howard and Hughlings were other eminent teachers in the college and they took earnest interest in the progress of their students. Ranade earned the encomiums of all of them by his diligence, devotion and proficiency in whatever he undertook to do. Ranade achieved remarkable mastery over the English language during his college career. In order that the students' knowledge of English be perfect, a Latin class was opened by one of the professors in which attendance was not compulsory. Some students were enthusiastic in the beginning about Latin, but soon their number dwindled, at last reaching the low level of four but among them was Ranade and he was the one pupil who never absented himself as was specifically stated in the report that was submitted to Principal Alexander Grant in 1859. This class was conducted for a year and Ranade mastered Latin to such an extent that he could read Ceaser and Horace in the original. Chemistry was not a favourite subject with many but Ranade regularly attended the Chemistry class and won the admiration of his teacher.

An incident in connection with the Matriculation examination is worth mentioning. In his Marathi paper, Ranade wrote an essay on transformations in Hindu society since the day of Manu. In the course of this essay, he passed some severe strictures on British rule in India. He was taken to task for this and by way of punishment some of his marks were cut down. Apparently this did not act as a deterrent, since Ranade once again indulged in similar criticism of British rule while in college. He was required to write a comparative estimate of the Mahratta and British systems of administration. Ranade's pride in his Mahratta nationality got the better of his appreciation of British benefactions and Principal Alexander Grant admonished him by asking him to be more temperate in his expression. He did not stop there. He forfeited Ranade's scholarship for a full term and taught him a lesson that lasted him for life. These two occasions indicate decisively that he was very proud of the history of the Mahrattas and that he had formed certain prejudices and certain prepossessions in regard to the Mahrattas and the British. Whether Grant's action was due to political prejudice or not is debatable.

In his Matriculation examination, he also wrote an essay in his English paper on the rise and progress of Mahratta power. In this essay he described the mental commotion that rages in the mind of a writer while dealing with a delicate subject like this and he has exonerated Shivaji of the charge of pillage and brigandage made against him by Mussalman and British writers. But he did not hesitate to level the same charge against the Peshwas. The following extracts from his essay are illuminating :

“ To write the history of one's own country is always a pleasing task. The felicity and the pleasure (though a little alloyed with pain, when our former power and glory have departed from our nation, when the land knows not its sons for its masters) are yet still great when one sits to write about the rise and progress of his own nation. Misanthropy may like to brood over the mishaps which hastened the ruin, the pusillanimity and dissensions which precipitated the downfall of one's own country. Amidst the sickness so deadly and destruction so complete as now prevails through the land a warm and a patriotic bosom may prefer to breathe for a time purer air of more distant ages, when wealth, honour, liberty were the possession of his nation. With a mind



filled with such thoughts, a heart throbbing with such pleasure (though it must be owned not unmixed with pain), it is that I sit to write this essay.”

After making a beginning like this, Ranade wrote in the course of this essay : “ Thus originated the rise of the Mahratta nation — a band of robbers (if robbery be a proper name for what Shivaji did) led by a successful chief, laid the foundation of an immense empire. Shivaji was forced to rob, for no other plan promised the slightest success under the eagle-like sight and tyranny of Aurangzeb.” In the concluding portion of this essay wherein he referred to the doings of the Peshwas, he said : “ Thus was this empire founded by robbers and strengthened by robbery too ”.

This essay has some peculiar importance because Ranade dealt with this subject in later life in his book *Rise of the Mahratta Power*, but altogether in a different way. He was all admiration for the Mahratta saints and Shivaji in that book. In this essay Ranade has attempted to counter the charge of brigandage against Shivaji but held it valid against the Peshwas and the Mahratta period as a whole. Had he written the sequel to the *Rise of the Mahratta Power* as was his plan — originally Telang’s plan — to write the history of the Mahrattas, he might probably have justified the policy of the Peshwas also. What is of interest now is that, while he was taken to task for adversely criticising British rule, this anti-Mahratta essay of Ranade was favourably mentioned in the report of the Director of Public Instruction. This special mention is probably an indication of the anxiety of the British authorities of those days to encourage favourable opinion for the British and unfavourable opinion for the Mahrattas in the general public.

As soon as Ranade joined the Elphinstone Institution he was awarded a scholarship of Rs. 10 per month. Later, the scholarship was raised to Rs. 15 and Rs. 20 a month. When he passed the Matriculation examination he held a junior scholarship of Rs. 60 a month for three years and later a senior scholarship of Rs. 120 for three years. From the Matriculation onwards he kept the first rank in all examinations. In April 1862 he passed the B. A. examination in the first class. At that time, the Honours examination and the Ordinary pass examination were quite separate. The University prescribed only subjects for the Honours examination and the student was left to find his own books, though the professors might

have recommended some. Ranade prepared himself so well that the examiner was highly impressed by his learning and presentation. In his admiration he collected for him a sum of Rs. 200 to purchase books and also presented him a gold medal for his high proficiency in history and economics. On the strength of these studies and in accordance with the regulations then obtaining, Ranade was awarded the M.A. degree in 1864.

It is possible to form an adequate estimate of the extent and depth of Ranade's reading during his undergraduate days from what he himself once wrote in his answer papers at the Senior Scholarship examination in 1861. One of the questions asked of the candidates was : "How many books have you read until you appeared for this examination? What are their names and those of their authors?" In his reply Ranade wrote, "I entered the College on June 11, 1858. An account of what I have studied privately within these three years, it is impossible to give at this moment. Firstly because, I did not expect such a question now and secondly because, I am not much in the habit of keeping a memorandum of my studies. Still I will state here the names of all the books I can remember at this moment to have read within these three years :

Macaulay — History of England, Volumes I and II and Essays, Vols. I, II and III.

Gibbon — Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (Complete).

Buckle — Introduction to the History of Civilisation of the English People, Vol. I.

Scott — Waverley, Antiquary, Guy Mannering, Rob Roy, Old Mortality.

Bulwar Lytton — Harold and Reinzi.

Plato's Dialogues — Phaedo, Georgius, Sophist.

Milton — Paradise Lost.

Scott — Marmion, the Lay of the Last Minstrel.

Byron — Giour, Corsair, Bride of Abydos.

Horntook — Diversions, Vol. I.

Washington Irving — Tales of Traveller, Conquest of Granada.

Adam Smith — Wealth of Nations, Vols. I and II.

Barbauld — Selections from the Spectator, Vol. I.

Madam D'Arblay—Cecilia.

Campbell — Poems,



This is surely a formidable list of extra books that Ranade read besides the texts prescribed for his examination. Among the texts were Shakespeare's *Henry V*, *Henry VIII* and *The Merchant of Venice*; Bacon's *Novum Organum*, Butler's *Analogy*. Even as he was studying for the B.A. examination which he passed in 1862, he read a number of books besides his texts. Among the books were Macaulay's *Speeches*, Tocqueville's *Revolution*, the *Last of the Barons*, Byron's *Don Juan*, *Childe Harold* and *Sardanapalus* and Cardinal Newman's *University and Education* and some more. While he was reading for this examination he was also entrusted with the work of teaching and yet it is noteworthy that while appearing for the Honours test he read some 25,000 pages, wrote out the summaries of all he read — that was his usual practice — and made extensive, comparative notes when he read more than one book on the same subject. He was particularly fond of history and economics, and he maintained a life-long study of these subjects. Mr. Govind Krishna Tilak of Barsi asked Ranade in 1893 about his life as a student when he slipped into an autobiographical mood and told Tilak in person, "I am fond of all kinds of books and all learning but I have a special fascination for history and economics and therefore I have read extensively in these subjects. I have also read Shakespeare and Scott. Whenever I read any book, it is my practice to summarise its contents in my own language and when I am easily able to do so, I conclude that I have understood it well. Nobody need be surprised at my wide range of knowledge and information. No one possibly had so good opportunities and equipment to acquire knowledge as I had. Sir Alexander Grant was my master and he gave me excellent guidance. I could spend 12 years in college as a student, fellow and teacher and I could use the College library to utmost use. The students of my day did not waste their time even during the holidays. They used to choose a particular subject for study and pursue it."

Ranade distinguished himself as an elegant essayist and an able expounder of whatever subject he took up for study. He showed clear indications of this in his essays as a student in college. He took great pains to systematise his ideas and strung them together logically and methodically. His writing was forthright and frank. He was once asked to write an essay on agriculture. He frankly wrote that having been born a Brahmin, he had no opportunity to work as a tiller of the land and therefore

his statements would be deficient in point of personal experience. This essay got the remark, 'Very good'. Once the subject set to him was 'Place of Beauty in Practical Life'. Ranade apparently wrote a lengthy essay and therefore the examiner gave the remark, 'too long an exercise in composition'. On other occasions he was told that he wrote lengthy, involved complex sentences and sometimes made too daring statements. But the general opinion was that he had an adequate power of expression, a rich vocabulary and admirable command of written English. He showed similar distinction in his law and advocate's examinations also.

Ranade was a great favourite of Sir Alexander Grant. When he retired and was about to leave for England Ranade took the lead in organising a farewell meeting. An address was presented to him. It was written by Ranade and Sir Alexander made special mention of its excellence, pointing to Ranade's 'extensive reading and powerful mind'. It was Sir Alexander who was responsible for appointing Ranade as Professor of English language and literature in the Elphinstone College. Dinshaw Wacha who was Ranade's junior contemporary at college recorded some of his reminiscences in 1901 while speaking to a gathering of Elphinstonians. He said of Ranade, "Listless of all that was going on around him, we would find him either intensely absorbed in writing his weekly essay or reading aloud his Grote and Gibbon, his Hume and Macaulay, his Locke and Hamilton and the rest of the standard authors which to us, freshmen, were such a terrible bug-bear to master. The Principals and Professors, Dr Harkness, Sir Alexander Grant, Professors Hughlings and Sinclair considered him as one who was destined to make his mark in the public life of this great city and achieve the highest distinction." Abaji Vishnu Kathavate, another junior contemporary of Ranade, has described Ranade with the same admiration. He says : "I had watched Ranade as a student and ever since then I have entertained great respect for him. His singleminded dedication to study was an amazing phenomenon. He used to read even in the recess between two examination papers and he used to get absorbed in reading so easily that somebody had to remind him that the recess time was up."

The first convocation of the University of Bombay was held on April 28, 1862. Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of Bombay and Chancellor of the University, specially mentioned Ranade as a distinguished *alumnus* of the University and even referred to his pursuit



of law, remarking that he hoped for much from law graduates. When Ranade took the law degree, Sir Bartle again addressed the convocation and felt gratified that Ranade had fully come up to his expectations. Ranade was nominated a Fellow of the Senate of the University in recognition of his distinction in learning. Year after year, the burden of Sir Bartle's addresses was that English-educated Indians should widely spread the message of Western learning and civilisation and indirectly suggested that support to benign British rule was its best assurance. The background of such an expectation is obvious. The mutiny of 1857 had just then been suppressed and the rulers were anxious to enlist the support of the better, the enlightened class of Indians. Before coming to Bombay as Governor, Sir Bartle was a member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General at Calcutta, and had a hand in shaping the new educational policy of the Government. The three Universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay were the immediate outcome of that policy.

The roots of Ranade's firm faith in the salutary character of the British connection could be traced to the addresses of Sir Bartle Frere. Indeed, Ranade has recorded his appreciation of those addresses in a preface he wrote to the volume of Sir Bartle's collected speeches in 1870 in the following words, "He (Sir Bartle Frere) has placed us under deep obligations by encouraging love of learning and culture among educated Indians. His University Convocation addresses were veritable Government despatches. Like a prophet he has compared the present with its good and bad characteristics with those of the past and the future. His speech in which he advocated freedom for Universities may be regarded as a specimen of the rare eloquence one meets with in this country. His annual addresses were a most valuable exchange of thought and their moral effect would never be obliterated from the minds of his listeners." Ranade's whole career shows that these words were not used in a conventional and formal way.

Ranade believed in perfection and did nothing in a slipshod or indifferent manner. When he was preparing for the Advocates' examination he had secured permission to go to the Small Causes Court and the High Court to follow the procedure of those courts. Till May 1866, he used to watch the work of both the original and appellate sides. There is an impression abroad that he did not know Sanskrit but it is erroneous. It is true that he offered Marathi instead of Sanskrit at the Matriculation examination, but later, he

began his studies in Sanskrit with the help of a Shastri, in 1863. For two years he pursued that study. In this report for 1865 he has mentioned that by that time he had read the *Hitopadesha*, the *Vikramorvasi* and the *Shakuntala*. Some of the books he read in 1863-64 and 1864-65 may be mentioned in order to have some idea about the range of his reading. He read Buckle's two volumes, Macaulay's five volumes of the *History of England*, Thier's *French Revolution*, Shelley's works, *Cenci* and *Revolt of Islam*, Maine's *Ancient Law*, Mill's *Representative Government*, Milman's two volumes of *Christianity* and Carlyle's *French Revolution*, besides many others.

It has already been mentioned that even before he passed his B.A. he was appointed a Fellow at his college and entrusted with teaching work. From the reports available it seems that he taught mathematics, economics, geography, logic, composition and English poetry. Even for teaching the textbooks, he used to read all that was available about the lessons in the texts and make his teaching and speaking informative and lively. In some of these subjects, he had no scope to show his originality but he did show it while teaching geography. This subject is usually found to be very dull by the students and lends itself most to the cramming habit. The reason usually is that the teacher cannot make it interesting by presenting it in a proper perspective. Quite often, he has not the ability to do so. Ranade made the study of geography quite attractive for his pupils by connecting it with history. He would associate the story of this great man or that hero from some period of the history of a particular country with the name of a city or a river or a mountain and thus make the geographical knowledge of his students unforgettable. He knew, besides, the value of maps in learning geography and so was entrusted with the work of making suggestions and recommendations for the preparation of maps by Mr E. I. Howard, then Director of Public Instruction. He undertook the work willingly but with the retirement of Mr Howard and his subsequent death, nothing more seems to have been done about it with Ranade in the picture.

Ranade made both history and geography quite interesting by pointing out with the help of illustrations, how history, through man's agency, led to alterations and transformations in the face of the earth. He would trace the slow but steady process of the conquest of nature by man as man became more and more civilised,



more and more learned. This often meant narration of the careers of men and women who made different discoveries and inventions and thus changed the course of events and became representatives of the spirit of particular eras and ages. History and economics being his favourite subjects, he was steeped in the study of the histories of Rome, Greece, England and India. Histories of Egypt, Babylonia and Iran being allied were also studied by him, at any rate, in their outlines. While setting any historical subject for essay to his students he would give them a lecture beforehand on its scope from his vast knowledge and recommend books to read. He would also explain the implications of administrative innovations like the subsidiary system, permanent settlement of land revenue, abolition of *Sati*, etc. from the history of India instead of making it merely a matter of dates and names of dynasties.

One year, Ranade was asked to teach the 44th chapter of Gibbon which deals with the evolution of Roman Law. It is necessary to be acquainted with the principles of jurisprudence in order to follow the growth of the legal system of a country; so he attended classes in jurisprudence in order to equip himself properly for teaching that portion. He did his work entirely to the satisfaction of his students, superiors and himself. As teacher of economics he was required to teach Mill's political economy. He was not a gushing admirer of Mill because his doctrine of free trade was in Ranade's opinion not calculated to serve the best interests of an undeveloped and unindustrialised country like India. The students in those days, almost exclusively, depended only on Mill for their study but Ranade, who was never content with only one-book knowledge of a subject recommended his students to read Malthus, Bastiat, Ramsay, M'Culloch and Senior. He expounded the teachings of all these authors to them in his lectures and then taught Mill also. How Ranade developed his thought and came to be acknowledged as the founder and father of what is called Indian economics will be discussed at a later stage.

Though Ranade was such a painstaking and conscientious teacher, it would appear that his students did not derive full benefit from their singular good fortune of having him as their teacher. Even then, as now, most of them looked upon passing the examination as the be-all and end-all of all their effort; acquisition of real knowledge was far from their minds. In one of his reports he said;

“I was sorry to find that the majority of the class were content with the manuals. I have never found it to be true from my experience as a teacher and student that in the long run, there is less waste of time and energy, more of permanent benefit and present enjoyment in reading the largest standard authority upon a particular period of history than in reading half a dozen times the smaller manuals, invariably so dry and only fit for revision purposes.”

Ranade brought to his students the wealth of information he gleaned from wide and varied sources but his rich fare was too much for the intellectual and mental digestion of his pupils who were ordinary or below ordinary, but for those of a superior calibre among them his teaching must have been very stimulating indeed.

After Ranade passed his B.A. examination, he was appointed as examiner in Marathi for the Matriculation examination. As usual, he was anxious to convince himself that he was quite fit for the job. In his report he said, “To carry out the responsibility that lay on me as an examiner, I read six chapters of the *Dnyaneshwari*, perused several parts of the *Navanit*, and studied poems of Moropant. It was necessary to get a knowledge of the minutest details of the set course of study so as to be able to set the questions properly. I spent most of my leisure time in February and March in this work.” In 1866, Ranade was appointed acting Marathi Translator. This was his first regular official duty. Marathi literature was a favourite subject of his. With the help of men like Godbole, Kramavant and others he took great pains to study all the books and pamphlets that were received by him. All the published books were, as a rule, to go to him. He made the best of this job by writing detailed annual reviews of the progress that was being made in the field of Marathi letters. As he was deeply read in English literature he was naturally not satisfied with what was appearing in Marathi every year, but he was conscious that progress was bound to be not very rapid and he approached the work of his reviews in a spirit of hopefulness.

Ranade worked as Marathi Translator only from June 1866 to April 1868, i.e., for less than two years and even during that period he had to function as Karbhari at Akkalkot and judge at Kolhapur, where books and publications intended for him were sent. He used to send his reviews of them to the Director of Public Instruction. They were really meant for Government's information but some of them were found to be of wider importance by the Education



Department and so they were published in the *Bombay Educational Record*, a departmental publication. All his reviews showed that the teacher in him was still fully alive. Reviewing a translation of Green's *Idiomatic Sentences* he said that every fourth sentence in the book needed correction. Reviewing a brief history of India, he remarked that such sketches would never be popular and useful unless the writer had acquainted himself with authoritative works on that subject and had benefited by them ; he would never be able to discriminate between important and unimportant events in history unless he was able to visualise before his mind's eye in vivid perspective the panorama of past events.

Reviewing a chronicle of the Satara Bhosales, he happened to write the following remarks about Shivaji and his times : " After all it is not just to judge of men of the past times in the abstract. One must look upon men and things, in the light of contemporary history and bear in mind the peculiar circumstances of people who lived amidst troublous times. Judged by this charitable (or either just) standard, Shivaji was a favourable specimen of the race to which he belonged." Criticising a dramatic composition on the story of Draupadi in the *Mahabharata* he said that it was essentially a tragic theme and its treatment was largely vitiated by the introduction of the clown or the fool called Vidushaka who was invariably to be found in Sanskrit plays and opined favourably on another play called *Jayapal* which was written by his friend Vinayak Janardan Kirtane. He wrote a lengthy review of a novel called *Ratnaprabha* in which love scenes which were a normal feature of society in Europe were delineated against the Indian background. He criticised them as unnatural and alien, but he did not condemn them. He said on the other hand : " Pure, unadulterated love between man and woman in the first pure blossoming of innocence and health, love which culminates in the still holier bond of marriage, is the exhaustless resource of the charm of every literary work of enduring success, because of all the passions of human nature, love alone raises him above himself in noble sacrifices. This equal love between man and woman in their first prime has a stronger energy to influence human nature than the regulated and unequal love between parent or child or any of the other family relations."

Ranade apparently acquainted himself with all the literature that was published in Marathi till 1864, i.e. during the period of

about 50 years since the British flag flew in Maharashtra. Ever since the days of the *Dnyaneshwari*, the total of the publications in Marathi was only 661 and this set Ranade thinking furiously. Yet taking stock of this situation, he observed in his review : “I hope I shall not be accused of unduly depreciating the progress that has been achieved, but there can be no mistake that to any one who looks at it from a stranger’s point of view, our existing literature will appear for the most part either superstitious or childish. Many centuries of earnest effort are needed before this reproach can be washed away. The present, however, is full of promise and there is every likelihood that before long, the Marathi language will be in a position to take first rank among the cultivated languages of modern India.”

That Ranade was an ardent believer in the increasing use of the Indian languages like Marathi, Gujarati and Kannada and had faith in their future may further be deduced from the interest that he took in their getting prescribed for study in the University of Bombay. Till 1870, these Indian languages had a place of equality with the classical languages but since then, till 1901, their literatures were excluded from study. In the course of the first Matriculation examination of the University of Bombay, a modern Indian language figured as an alternative to a classical language. It was also permitted as a subject at the examinations leading to the B.A. degree. The large number of failures at the first Matriculation examination (110 out of 192) was attributed by the examiners to the candidates’ neglect of the study of modern Indian languages. Sir Bartle Frere, the then Chancellor in his address to the University Convocation on April 28, 1862, said, “The great majority of your countrymen can only learn through the language which is taught them at their mother’s knee and it must be through such language mainly that you can impart to them all that you would communicate of European learning and science.” Yet, from 1870 modern Indian languages were excluded from the higher examinations of the University. Nevertheless, eminent educationists continued to stress their importance. Thus, Sir James Gibbs, who was Vice-Chancellor of the University for a continuous period of nine years said, at the convocation held on January 28, 1879, in his reply to an address by the Senate read by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts: “While striving for mastery over a foreign language, without which success in your profession is impossible, do not



forget that you have a vernacular of your own, which you must mainly look to, to spread around to others the benefits you have gained in your own course of education.”

Ranade was appointed a Fellow of the University of Bombay in 1866 when he passed his M.A. He remained associated with the University during all the years that intervened between this time and his coming to Bombay as High Court Judge in 1893. It was only natural that during his leisure he should have taken more interest in the affairs of the University. He was elected a member of the Syndicate and also Dean of the Faculty of Arts. He returned to his favourite subject of finding an honoured place for the Indian languages in the University. They had fallen on bad days since 1867 under the influence of Oxonian educationists who kept on dominating the educational world in Bombay in spite of opposition from such men of influence as Dr. John Wilson and Sir Raymond West. A movement for their reinstatement began in 1881, though it did not gather momentum. In 1888 and 1890 resolutions aiming at introduction of Indian languages in the curriculum were moved in the Senate but they were defeated. Ranade's friends Rao Bahadur Joshi, Telang and Vaman Abaji Modak were his helpmates in all this work. Ranade took up this matter in 1894. His modest proposal was to get just one book from Marathi, Gujarati and Kanarese prescribed along with Sanskrit or Persian books. In his speech before the Senate he ridiculed the notion that it would be a serious burden on the students to read just one book and write a few lines in the languages that they were speaking at home. Ranade's proposal had been approved by the Faculty of Arts and the Syndicate but he failed to carry the Senate with him. Parsee members of the Senate were conspicuously among his opponents.

He reintroduced this resolution in 1898 and made a serious effort to educate public opinion in its favour by writing five articles. They were published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* and the *Times of India*. He pointed out the advance Marathi literature had made by that time, his object being to convince those concerned that there were sufficient books in that language to justify its inclusion in the degree curriculum. He showed that by general consent there were at least 60 suitable books. The consequence was that the Syndicate appointed a committee consisting of Dr. Mackichan, Pherozechah Mehta and Ranade to inquire into the matter. It all ended in the Indian languages being included

for study as a voluntary subject for the M.A. examination in place of a classical language if the student so desired. Ranade did not live to see this but it was for him a posthumous victory. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad took up the cause after him. While making a motion in that behalf, he said : “ Standing in this hall and speaking to any proposition about the introduction of the vernaculars in the University course, one cannot but feel oppressively reminded of the irreparable loss that the country, and this University in particular, has sustained by the sudden death of one who was such a prominent figure at all University debates — I mean the late Justice Ranade. The very last conversation I had with him was in connection with the proposition that I am now moving and about which, as you are all aware, he was so keen. He told me that he was not certain that he would be in Bombay on the day of the meeting and asked me very feelingly to do my best to secure the acceptance by the Senate of the very limited and harmless recognition claimed for the vernaculars in this proposition.” What great strides the Indian languages have made since need not be discussed here.

It will not be improper to touch upon a few more of Ranade's activities which can be described as educational. While working as a Judge at Poona, he was asked to function as a lecturer in law at the Deccan College where a law class was started and in which Gokhale studied law for a while. But the Accountant-General considered that as an irregular appointment and he had to give up that work. His high position as an educationist was recognised by the Baroda State Government by consulting him while organising education there. When he became a member of the District Pleaders' Examination Board, he strove to make the examination less stiff. While at Poona, he was on the advisory committees of the Poona Native Institution, the Deccan Educationl Society, the Female High School and similar bodies and his counsel was invariably considered precious. Ranade's attention was also attracted to the problem of the students' health and he is reported to have urged that “ physical exercise should be made part of a college discipline and allowance should be made for success in it, along with literary qualifications ”. It may be pointed out that before Ranade said this Justice James Gibbs had warned the people in his convocation address that the mass of the rising generation was being educated at too high a pressure and said : “ In this generation you are destroying the bodies to strengthen the minds;



in the next generation both mind and body will fail if you press them so hard". Similarly Dr. Bhandarkar had also referred to the problem in his convocation address of 1893 and observed that one of the causes of the early deaths of Hindu graduates was want of a liking for physical exercise and suggested that "physical exercise must be regularly resorted to by the young as well as the old, if we are not to die off, under the tension".

It would seem, therefore, that the best minds of the day thought alike about physical training. When Ranade moved in the matter, his method, as usual, was thorough. He addressed 400 letters to his friends requesting them to discuss this subject and send him reports. He received 140 replies. He also inquired into the living conditions of undergraduates, and carefully examined mortality statistics. Ultimately, he reached the conclusion that the causes of the premature death of University graduates were poverty and heavy burden of studies. So in 1895, he made an effort to lighten the burden of studies. In those days, candidates for B.A. were required to pass two previous examinations before the degree examination. Ranade proposed that there should be only one Intermediate examination and that a student who secured 45 per cent of marks in a subject should be exempt from appearing in that subject again in case of his failure in the whole examination. Ranade made out a strong case in favour of his proposal by quoting from the practice obtaining in other Indian and European Universities and remarked there was no loss of prestige in it. But he did not succeed in giving this relief to the undergraduates and curiously enough his opponents were the same people who had opposed him when he proposed the study of an additional Marathi or Gujarati book at the B.A. examination and an essay in these languages on the ground that it would be an additional and unbearable load.

After Ranade came to Bombay as High Court Judge, he was offered the membership to the Advisory Committee which was formed to make arrangements regarding the expenditure of the donation of Rs. 30 lakhs that Jamshetji Tata had made to promote technical education. He wanted to start an independent university for that purpose. He died in 1904 and Ranade in 1901 but his mind was well known to his collaborator, Padshah. In co-operation with him, Ranade had evolved a scheme of an institution which he desired should be located near Bombay to concentrate on technical, industrial and scientific teaching and that the Bombay Municipal

Corporation should promote the scheme with additional financial help if necessary. Ranade had induced Dr. Balachandra Bhatavdekar to move the question in the Municipal Corporation. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta pointed out that no institution, however useful its work may be, could be financed by the Municipal Corporation if it was located beyond municipal limits. The Tata Research Institute at Bangalore grew out of these discussions. As if to fulfil the desire of Ranade and Mehta, the School of Sociology and Labour has lately come into being at Chembur, a suburb of Bombay, with the help of Jamshetji Tata's descendents.

Thus Ranade was helpful to all educational activities. How greatly his help was valued may be illustrated by a little story connected with the University of Bombay. The late Sir Mangaldas Nathubhai had donated a sum of Rs. 2,50,000 to the University. But his successors raised some objections to the gift being actually made by taking the matter to the High Court. Everybody knew that ultimately the University would realise the donation, but litigation meant delay. So Ranade was requested to talk the matter over to the successors of Sir Mangaldas. He did it and the matter was settled. The Governor of Bombay while paying homage to Ranade in the condolence meeting held after his death mentioned this incident and observed that Ranade was instrumental in saving the University from litigation and securing the donation for it without trouble. But what Mr Justice Candy said at the Ranade Memorial meeting in his capacity as Vice-Chancellor of the University neatly summed up Ranade's career of usefulness to the University. He said : "In my capacity as Chairman of the Syndicate, experience of Ranade's work was constantly coming before me. When any awkward question came forward, at once every one's eyes would turn in the direction of Ranade. There was no other who could show the way out of a difficulty like him and we used to regard him as our *guru*. For saying this no one will charge me with exaggeration. Whatever the trouble and whoever the person in difficulty, Ranade would never turn a deaf ear — that was certain. He had the patience of the saints, he was entirely free from guile or hypocrisy and every one was spontaneously drawn to him."

A clear impression of Ranade as he was in Bombay in his declining years may be gathered from his pen-picture the Rt. Hon. M. R. Jayakar has drawn in the first volume of *The Story of My Life*. Jayakar was one of the founders of the Aryan Education Society



in Bombay and Ranade was Chairman of its Advisory Council. Ranade was, besides, a frequent visitor to the house of Rao Bahadur V. J. Kirtikar, Jayakar's grandfather and so Jayakar had many opportunities of watching him in his young days. Says Jayakar : "The news of Ranade's death came upon us with suddenness and we felt that we had lost, nay all India had lost, a great soul. His greatness, as it struck me during my contact with him, lay not in his intellectual height, though it was undoubtedly of an uncommon order, but in his indefatigable energy, his versatile attainments and his suave disposition, concealed behind a stern exterior. I had not come across any one who knew better the secret of governing his temper. His patriotism, it always struck me, served him with a leaven in all acts and a happy admixture of a retiring and an active disposition enabled him to win the affections of the serious and the superficial alike. His temperament, in spite of his proverbial reticence, was so accommodating that it was a marvel to observe him conducting himself on critical occasions.

"I am inclined to call him not only a Proteus of human talents but also a Proteus of human tempers. In this adaptability, nature had served him well in the provision of an exterior so innocent and simple looking, that, coupled with the strong command of temper he had made into a habit, he appeared to be most fitted to rise above ordinary mortals merely on the strength of his uncommon intellectual gifts. What struck me further was his patience and sympathy with young men and their pursuits. During my experience of public men I have come to regard this feature of sympathy with young men in an elderly leader as an unmistakable index of greatness. Judged accordingly, Ranade was one of the loftiest Indians living in my time. His practical shrewdness always enabled him to value a rising young man at his true worth and, with his interest in divergent pursuits, he was able to keep up a friendly contact with varying types of young men, in the hope of turning them to account at the right moment. This friendliness, so flattering to the young, grew more and more with his readiness of access and his aversion to the constraint and artificiality of Western manners. The powers and energies that nature had given him were most judiciously used by him, and, with the insight and intuition of a master mind, he could easily discover what subject could profitably occupy his attention for public good from time to time."

### III

#### BOMBAY'S FORMATIVE INFLUENCES

RANADE'S LOVE of learning and enthusiasm to make his mind a store of information and knowledge have already been described in detail in the last chapter. But Ranade was not a mere book-worm. He was steadily imbibing the influences of the new forces at work in Indian society. Bombay was becoming their focal point in Western India. It was nearly forty years after the fall of the Peshwa's rule in Poona that Ranade found himself in Bombay as an enthusiastic student eager to drink at the rich fountain of Western knowledge. A brief survey of what happened during these forty years in Bombay, the centre of new life, is necessary in order to trace the influences that shaped Ranade's mind and character during his 15 years in Bombay as a student and a teacher.

Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was appointed Governor of Bombay, laid down the policies that consolidated British power in Western India. He was constantly and consciously pursuing a well-defined course of winning over the conquered people into a mood that would be friendly and loyal to the new regime. He governed from 1819 to 1827. When he was only 17, he came out to India in 1796 as a writer in the Calcutta office of the East India Company. He was one of the most promising of the pupils of the College that Governor-General Wellesley had started at Calcutta to train the East India Company's servants in Indian languages, customs, history and traditions in spite of the opposition of the Company's Directors.

In 1801 he was appointed Deputy Secretary to the British Resident at Poona. It took many months for him to reach Poona. During the course of his protracted journey he closely observed the conditions in the territory he traversed and made a number of mental notes. Between 1802 and 1803 he had a close grasp of the conditions



in Poona. Nana Fadnavis was no more and all the members of the Mahratta confederacy were at sixes and sevens. It was within the sight and memory of Elphinstone that Bajirao II was humbled by Wellesley and installed by him as Peshwa in Poona in 1803. He was also witness to the rout of the Scindia and Bhosla in that year, being present in campaigns under the command of General Arthur Wellesley who later became famous as Duke of Wellington.

General Wellesley wrote to his brother, Governor-General Wellesley, that Elphinstone was as capable a soldier as a civilian and would make a fine diplomat also. Accordingly, Elphinstone was appointed to work as Resident at the court of the Bhosla of Nagpur from 1804 to 1808. He was then asked to officiate in the same capacity at the court of Doulatrao Scindia. While in his camp, Lord Minto who succeeded Wellesley as Governor-General of India sent him to the court of Kabul. This India-wide experience led Elphinstone to conclude that it was inevitable that the British should dominate the whole of India for their own good as for the good of the Indian people. After the conclusion of his Kabul mission, Minto appointed him Resident at Poona in 1811. Since then he saw the end of the Peshwa rule in 1818 and the surrender by Chhatrapati Pratapsingh of Satara, who hoped that the British would make over the whole of his territory to him and help him govern it also. Elphinstone only made him a prince of a small area around Satara.

With such experience behind him, Elphinstone first found himself Commissioner of the Deccan from December 1817 to October 1819 and from November 1819 to November 1827 he was the first Governor of Bombay. He calculated that people in Poona and everywhere were tired of misrule, oppression and unrest and a stable Government dispensing law and establishing peace was what they wanted. He decided to provide both as an enlightened despot and yet he was anxious not to make them feel that a foreign Government had replaced their own. At breakfast, he used to sit in the open and any one was free to approach him and talk to him. He knew Marathi well, allowed Marathi and Gujarati to be the languages of the courts and warned all officers that no innovations were to be made in the then existing system. He issued orders that revenue assessment was to be according to the yield from the land, no new taxes or cesses were to be levied nor old ones abolished unless they were obviously extortionate. Needless

to say that such a policy went far in appeasing the people.

Elphinstone's policy on two important matters made him a popular ruler. He gave a push to an educational movement in which the teaching of Western learning and the ancient learning of India were accommodated. He also initiated the policy of associating suitable Indians with the civil administration, including chiefly the judicial administration. He was in favour of giving higher and responsible appointments in this line as it indicated trust in the people. Until 1813, the Directors of the East India Company had never thought of providing any kind of education for the people in its territory. But in that year when the question of renewing the charter of the Company was raised in Parliament, Wilberforce succeeded in imposing the condition that the Company must set apart one lakh of rupees to provide for education on Eastern and Western lines. Elphinstone insisted on enforcing this condition in Bombay and Poona and thus what is known as English education was formally introduced in 1823. But even before that, the Christian Missionaries were already here and they had started schools, chiefly for teaching the Christian scripture. In 1815, what was known as the Bombay Education Society was started. The schools of this Society admitted the Anglo-Indian progeny of British soldiers, sailors and officers and so Indian residents of Bombay did not like to send their children to these schools. For their convenience, the Christian Missionaries started different and separate schools. Elphinstone tried to use these schools to begin with.

As Dadoba Pandurang has stated in his autobiography, Elphinstone established on August 21, 1822 the Bombay Native School Book and School Society with the co-operation of eminent Indians like Jagannath Shankarshet Murkute, Jamshetji Jeejebhoy, Framji Cawasji, Dhakji Dadaji, Mahomed Ibrahim Maqba and others. The secretaries of the Society were Captain George Jervis and Sadashiv Kashinath alias Bapu Chhatre. This Society published chiefly school texts in Marathi, Gujarati and Hindustani till 1835. In 1835, on March 7, English was declared as the medium of education and administration of the whole of India. This Society changed its name three times. In 1827 it called itself the Bombay Native Education Society, in 1837 the Elphinstone Native Education Society in memory of Elphinstone and in 1840 the Board of Education. Elphinstone and his successors provided funds for



the pursuit of its objectives in a generous measure.

During the existence of this Society, a number of persons distinguished themselves by their literary contributions. They were Captain Jervis, Captain Molesworth, Major Thomas Candy and his brother George Candy, Col. Kennedy, Ramchandra Shastri Janvekar, Jagannath Shastri Kramavant, Bal Shastri Ghagve, Bapu Chhatre, Gangadharshastri Phadke, Mann Waring, Hari Keshavji, Balshastri Jambhekar, Dadoba Pandurang, Nana Narayan, Bapushastri Shukla, Balkrishna Shastri Sovani and others. Most of the Shastris were residents of the territory just across the Bombay harbour known as Ashtagar, from Alibag to Nagaon, and the territory adjacent to Bombay in the north in Salsette and Bassein. The most conspicuous among them were Bapu Chhatre, Balshastri Jambhekar, Dadoba Pandurang and Hari Keshavji. Captain Jervis's services were the most distinguished and they were recognised by his colleagues and disciples when they voted him a farewell address on February 22, 1839, when he left for England after retirement.

In Poona, Elphinstone did not emphasise the need of teaching English and all that came in its wake including teaching of modern science and engineering. He preferred to make arrangements for teaching all branches of the old Sanskrit learning under competent teachers. The beginning was made on September 21, 1821 with a public declaration and the arrangements were so perfectly satisfactory to the preceptor and priestly class of Poona Brahmins that even the Peshwa Government's Swadeshi patronage of learning was eclipsed by them. For over twenty years this arrangement continued undisturbed.

In 1842 Major T. Candy started classes for teaching English in this Sanskrit Pathashala. His colleague was the celebrated Morshastri Sathe, who was appointed Munsiff at Surat in 1852. He encouraged his students like Krishna Shastri Chiplonkar, Krishna Shastri Rajwade, Mahadeo Shastri Kolhatkar, Shrikrishna Shastri Talekar and Vishnu Shastri Pandit to take to the study of English and Western learning. Some of these Shastris became so progressive as to support the reconversion of Shripat Sheshadri in Bombay for which Balshastri Jambhekar had carried on a sustained campaign. Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh alias Lokahitavadi was not in favour of confining education to old Sanskrit learning only and probably because of his efforts, classes to teach English were started in

Poona in 1832 in the Budhwar Wada. The difference originally maintained in the Poona and Bombay systems was thus obliterated by about 1850, for in June 1851, the Poona College replaced the old Sanskrit Pathashala.

By the time Ranade reached Bombay, so much educational progress under the British regime had been made. This new influence had created a new spirit among the people. Balshastri Jambhekar who lived for only 34 years was the most brilliant product of this education. A study of his career shows that had he lived a little longer, he would have left such an impress on his times as would have been similar to Ranade's. This foremost celebrity of the early years of British rule in Western India was a pioneer of many activities and movements which have entitled him to the everlasting gratitude of the generations that came after him. But unfortunately he is, more or less, a forgotten figure. A brief account of his career would be appropriate here because he counted among his disciples such eminent men as Dadabhai Naoroji Dordi, Bhau Daji Lad, Kero Lakshman Chhatre and Nana Moroji Trilokekar all of whom were senior to Ranade and influenced the mind of Ranade as a young man in Bombay. Jagannath Shankarshet and Dadoba Pandurang were his other contemporaries who outlived Jambhekar and therefore influenced Ranade. Balshastri led the renaissance of Indian thought which had its origin in Bombay. As a pioneer educationist, he formed a remarkable link between Indian and European thought and had the opportunity and privilege of laying in Bombay the earliest foundations of almost all the activities that constituted public life in those days. Education, literature, science, antiquarian research, journalism, social reform and political progress claimed his attention simultaneously.

During the very brief life of only 34 years (1812-1846), Balshastri accomplished a versatile effort of extraordinary dimensions. In 1830, at the early age of 17, he started his meteoric career as Secretary to the Bombay Native Education Society which was a nucleus of the Education Department of the Bombay State. In this capacity he wrote and got his friends to write several books in Marathi which had the effect of training that language to run in smooth and desirable literary channels. In 1834 the Elphinstone Institution was founded and Balshastri was appointed assistant professor of mathematics and science. He held this post for ten years and worked as acting professor also for two years more. It is during



these years that he had for his pupils such distinguished men as Dadabhai Naoroji and Bhau Daji. He knew well about a dozen European and Indian languages and his wide acquaintance with the progressive thought of India and England enabled him to take a prominent part in the activities of such learned bodies as the Bombay Geographical Society and the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Though all Balshastri's work was done at such a young age, he displayed a keen foresight, an intelligent appraisal of events and a sober and wide outlook on life and above all a hearty desire to reform and serve his country. His English contributions to the Anglo-Marathi *Durpan* and the monthly periodical in Marathi, *Digdarshan*, and the various books he wrote covered a wide range of subjects ; from widow marriage to the evolution of Marathi script and deciphering of ancient inscriptions, from measures of reform in His Majesty's Privy Council to the necessity of Indians studying European medicine, from the intricacies of the new Marathi grammar to the importance of geography and the advantages of pure and applied mathematics and from the microscope and steam-engine to astronomy and "inquiries regarding intellectual powers and the investigation of truth". All this was done within some fifteen years of a life of active Government service. It is no wonder that Bal Gangadhar Shastri Jambhekar was acclaimed by his contemporaries as "far in advance of his countrymen", "a conspicuous ornament of society" and "the most learned native who has yet appeared in western India".

Some of the tributes paid to him by his contemporaries and disciples, British and Indian, may be extracted here with the suggestion that Balshastri's complete career and character might be studied from the three volumes of *Memoirs and Writings of Acharya Balshastri Jambhekar* by G. G. Jambhekar published on the occasion of his death centenary in 1946. Sir Erskine Perry, an eminent scholar and judge of the Supreme Court of Bombay said of him in the course of his charge to the Grand Jury: "To the wide range of information and enlightened morality resulting from an excellent European education to the most solid and rare attainments in science and literature, both European and Asiatic ; and to the influence which was the just and natural result of a character and mind thus distinguished and adorned he added an anxiety and zeal for native improvement which I have never seen equalled ; and

which have forcibly impressed upon my mind the conviction that the loss of no individual in Bombay, European or native of whatever rank, could prove so great a calamity to Western India, as that of our lamented friend, the late Balshastree ”.

The report of the Board of Education for 1846 contained the following remark about Balshastri: “ Balshastree united in an eminent degree the highest qualities which a paternal Government would look for on the part of one who devotes himself to the business of the instruction of youth. His attainments in science, his conversance with European literature and his remarkable facility and elegance in English composition, enabled him to take a high place among the best scholars of the day ; but in addition to this acquired knowledge, his simple, unostentatious deportment and unwearied efforts on behalf of his countrymen, ensured him the respect and regard of all Europeans to whom he was intimately known ; while on the other hand, the zeal and industry with which he devoted the far greater part of each 24 hours to the best interests of his countrymen, with no other regard to self than is involved in the love of praise from those whose praise is worth acquiring, secured for him an influence as extensive in range as it was beneficial in character.”

Dadabhai Naoroji wrote of him in 1909 : “ I know him only as my teacher and indeed as a very able, tactful, amiable and wise teacher . . . . We looked up to him with great respect and admiration as much for his wide learning as for his whole character . . . . His death was a loss not only to our Institution but to the whole community. He was President of our Native Improvement Society . . . . Under his able, amiable and inspiring guidance the student members derived great benefit indeed.” Among the early *alumni* of the University of Bombay none but the late Sir Narayan Chandavarkar seems to have appreciated the worth of Balshastri. Speaking on the occasion of the Royal Asiatic Society’s Centenary in 1905, he said : “ The first antiquarian scholar among Hindus who enriched the literature of this Society was Professor Bal Shastri Jambhekar. He was something of a genius — as skilled a mathematician and literary scholar as he was an erudite shastri.” The glowing tribute that Sir Narayan paid to Balshastri quite incidentally at the meeting of past and present students of the Elphinstone College held to mourn the death of Ranade in 1901 would be even more pertinent here. Sir Narayan said ; “ Mr Ranade was



undoubtedly the premier of graduates — the best Elphinstonian — and there is no one among our educated men, either of the past or the present, with whom we can compare him unless we go back to the forties of the past century and think of Professor Balshastri Jambhekar, the first native professor appointed to a chair in this institution. Those who knew Professor Jambhekar — men like Mr Dadabhai Naoroji and the late Mr Sorabji Shapoorji Bengalee who were his pupils—spoke of him as a man of brilliant parts and many-sided activities, simple and kind, but he died too early to enable any one to form a correct measure of what he might have been, had he lived longer.” Again, speaking on old Elphinstonians in 1910 in his anniversary address Sir Narayan ranked him as “ the first outstanding star of the Elphinstone College ” and observed further : “ what deserves particular mention is that Balshastri was above all narrowness of creed or caste or sect. To him Hindus, Parsis, Mohomedans, Christians were all alike.” Then he counted the other stars, mentioning Dadabhai Naoroji, Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, Mahadeo Govind Ranade, Pherozeshah Merwanji Mehta, Kashinath Trimbak Telang and Narayan Mahadeo Parmanand, and characterised them all as *Saptarshis* or the seven sages.

Balshastri's spirit of liberalism in social and religious matters was clearly evinced in the case of the readmission of a Brahmin boy called Shripat Sheshadri Paralikar to the Hindu fold after he had almost become a Christian. As perhaps this is the first *shuddhi* or readmission from a non-Hindu fold to the Hindu and as this episode caused great commotion in those days in the dovecots of the Christian missions, it may be briefly recorded here. A Narayan Sheshadri Paralikar came to Bombay from the Nizam's dominions in 1838 and began to have his education in a Christian mission school. By 1842 he completed his education and was employed as a teacher in the same mission school. In that atmosphere, he became a Christian, having been persuaded by Rev. Robert Nesbit to do so. Narayan's younger brother Shripat, aged 12, was also studying in his brother's school. Narayan's conversion to Christianity had already become a sensation in Bombay. Bombay Hindus held a public meeting and protested against this missionary aggression and resolved upon boycotting this school. Balshastri and Jagannath Shankershet decided to save young Shripat from the missionaries and gave full support to his father, Sheshadri Govind Paralikar, and advised him to demand possession of his minor boy,

Shripat, from Rev. Robert Nesbit, with whom he was staying along with his brother Narayan, but was not yet baptised like him.

Shripat's father demanded custody of his son, but Rev. Robert Nesbit was obdurate. The aggrieved father sought relief from the court of the Police Magistrate, but even he sided with his co-religionist and decided that custody of the boy may not be given to his father. Sir Henry Roper, Chief Justice of Bombay directed Rev. Nesbit on October 30, 1843 "to bring up the body of Shripat Sheshadri before the court on Friday next, the 3rd day of November, at 11 o'clock in the afternoon". Ultimately custody of his son was secured by Sheshadri Govind. The Chief Justice said: "I again say, the father has done nothing to forfeit his rights over his child and whatever our own feelings and predilections might be, his child must be restored to him." Balshastri's success in securing the release of Shripat from the clutches of Rev. Nesbit was, however, only the beginning of a storm that was soon to brew. Hindu orthodoxy in those days could not bear such an inroad into its ideas of sanctity of caste and custom. Staying for fifty-seven days in the house of a *mlechchha* and taking food and water there meant that Shripat had lost his caste and religion and not only Brahmin priesthood but the whole society rose against it. The leader of this movement for declaring Shripat an outcaste was an influential and rich Pathare Prabhu, Dhakji Dadaji Rane.

Balshastri regarded such action as not only inhuman and unkind, but also irreligious and un-Hindu. He was prepared to quote chapter and verse from the Smritis to justify reconversion or *shuddhi*, but he was not merely a rationalist reformer, but one who like Ranade and Tilak wanted to bring the orthodox Hindus round to accept what was rational as consistent with the religious injunctions. He tried to enlist the support of learned Pandits from Nasik and Poona and the Shankaracharya of Karvir Matha and succeeded in getting their consent to admit Shripat to the Hindu fold by administering him a *prayaschitta*, i.e. a purification rite, in Bombay and Banaras. But the greedy priesthood and its blind following boycotted Shripat, his family and their supporters which caused no little annoyance and inconvenience to Balshastri. What is noteworthy is that he would not throw overboard the authority of the Shastras and the Shankaracharya but rather submit to it — precisely what Ranade and Tilak did in similar situations, some years later.

Once again it is Sir Narayan Chandavarkar who has properly



evaluated the achievements of Balshastri in the field of social and religious reform. Speaking as President of the Bombay Provincial Social Conference in 1901, he observed: "Hindu social reform under British rule commenced in this Presidency in the thirties of the last century soon after the introduction of English education. Our first social reformer was Balshastri Jambhekar. He was a man of great talent and high character and it was he who persuaded the late Jagannath Shankarshet, regarded in those times as the leader of the Hindu community, to espouse the cause of a young man by name Shripat Sheshadri who had informally joined Christianity, but wanted to be taken back into caste as he had not eaten with Christians. There was then a great deal of commotion in the matter in the Hindu society of Bombay and the whole community was opposed to the admission of the young man. The late Dhakji Dadaji, then a prominent leader of the Hindus led the opposition; but by their tact Balshastri Jambhekar and the late Jagannath Shankarshet succeeded in getting round the community and the young man was readmitted. That was the first breach made in the stronghold of Orthodoxy." Had the idea of writing a biography of Balshastri occurred to Sir Narayan, he would have produced a notable work indeed.

Some observations made by "A Political Rishi" in the *Induprakash* dated May 11, 1885, in the course of a series of articles on social and religious reform, correctly sum up the position of Balshastri. The writer presumably was N. M. Parmanand, one of the seven stars of the Elphinstone Institution. He said: "From his premature death, the cause of intelligent and rational reform, religious and social, received a shock from which it has since never been able to recover. After him a new spirit of reform — more dashing and temporal and less spiritual moved the educated young men of the day — a spirit, which for a time threatened to turn the basis of Hindu Society topsy-turvy, but which for reasons easily conceivable, ended at last in its own defeat and decay." A wholly self-made man, who inherited no property but was of a very generous disposition, Balshastri was able to build a modest house in Kolbhat Lane and maintain a carriage and horse, but left hardly anything behind for his wife and only son. An appreciative government of the day, however, allowed them a pension of Rs. 50 a month, though unfortunately, they did not survive Balshastri for more than a couple of years to receive that benefit. Among Balshastri's

notable achievements was the first printed edition of *Dnyaneshwari* in 1845, in which different readings were given.

Though Ranade in his writings has referred to Balshastri's work two or three times, he has not left sufficient evidence to conclude that he was fully conversant with all that Balshastri had done. But, presumably, it could not be that he did not know or appreciate his achievements when even Chandavarkar knew them so well. His contemporaries like Jagannath Shankarshet, Dadoba Pandurang, Bhau Daji, Dadabhai Naoroji and others must, however, have influenced him more by their careers and characters, since he had direct contact with them. Of these, Jagannath Shankarshet, was older than even Balshastri by about ten years but he lived up to a ripe age of 62. He was the most prominent public man of the early British days in Western India. His family was settled in Bombay for generations and there was no movement or institution in those days with which he was not connected in one way or another as a counsellor, supporter, patron or the very soul. Elphinstone had taken him into confidence while defining and implementing his educational policy and his successors also followed him in enlisting Jagannath Shankarshet's co-operation for popularising whatever Government initiated. It was Jagannath Shankarshet who allowed a school for girls to be started in his own house and was the pioneer of women's education. He was the founder of the Student's Literary and Scientific Society which recently completed hundred years and runs a high school for girls. He was associated with the Agri-Horticultural Society, the Municipality of Bombay, the Victoria Museum, the G.I.P. Railway, the University of Bombay and in fact everything that denoted progress whether on the Government's initiative or that of the people.

In 1852, Jagannath Shankarshet started the first political association to demand rights for the people on a democratic and representative basis. His colleagues in this venture were Dadabhai Naoroji, Bhau Daji, Janshetji Jejeebhoy, Sakharam Lakshmanji and others. He was President of this body and his eldest son, Vinayak Jagannath Shankarshet, was Secretary. In 1861 he was nominated additional member of the Bombay Legislative Council. He utilised the opportunity as well as he could. He was always in the forefront to espouse a just cause of the people and in its pursuance evinced courage, determination and ability. Thus he taught a lesson to Muslims who obstructed a Vithoba procession, supported the eradication of *Sati*;



advocated the cause of vernaculars as media of instruction and succeeded in preserving the present cremation grounds in Bombay for the Hindus as they are now. He had an impressive and imposing personality, an admirable tact of dealing with people of all kinds and in his time he was universally recognised as the only leader, spokesman and advocate of the people. He died in 1865.

Dadoba Pandurang was a little younger than Balshastri. He was born in 1814 and died in 1882, 36 years after Balshastri's death. In his autobiography he gives numerous glimpses of Balshastri, whom he succeeded as director of the Normal School, which was started for training teachers. He resigned his post as Deputy Collector at Thana in 1861 because he could not stand the pin-pricks and persecution of his superior officer, who was a white man. His memory is still green as a grammarian and a writer of chaste, devotional Marathi. He was a religious reformer and it is as such that Ranade came into contact with him. He was one of the founders of the Paramahansa Sabha which aimed at the abolition of caste and idol-worship and saw nothing wrong in widows marrying again if they wanted. As this Sabha worked secretly for fear of offending the people, its work could not grow rapidly but it can be legitimately said that its mission was resurrected a few years later in the form of the Prarthana Samaj of which Ranade with Bhandarkar, and a little later Chandavarkar, was a great pillar.

Dr. Bhau Daji's contact with Ranade was closer because he treated Ranade for his eye troubles. Bhau Daji was a great medical man of his times, but he is remembered more for his philanthropy and scholarship. Born in 1822 at a place called Manjre on the Goa border, he came to Bombay at an early age in 1830. After some education he had to take up a teacher's job for his livelihood, but when in 1845, the Grant Medical College was started, he joined it and in 1851, he began practice in medicine. He took great interest in the ancient rock inscriptions and copper plates and the research work involved in it. Rao Saheb Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik born in 1833, was in Government service for some time but began to practise as a lawyer in 1862 and had the same interests as Bhau Daji's. He was particularly famous for his punctuality, disciplined behaviour and public work. Sir Mangaldas Nathubhai, Sir Cawasji Jehangir Readymoney, Bhagwandas Purushottamdas, Premchand Roychand, Sir Jamshetji Jejeebhoy, Vishnushastri Pandit, Bal Mangesh Wagle, Ramkrishna Bhandarkar

and Vaman Abaji Modak were his contemporaries. They were highminded and public-spirited men whose example could not have failed to impress Ranade.

One more rather extraordinary personage lived from 1825 to 1873 and, therefore, was Ranade's senior. His name was Vishnu Bhikaji Gokhale but has been remembered better as Vishnuboa Brahmachari. His special achievement lay in repulsing the attacks of Christian missionaries on Hinduism. He was a fluent, fearless speaker, quick at repartees and it seemed as if he loved disputation and controversy. His thoughts have been recorded in a number of books and tracts that he wrote and in one of them he has explained his ideas about social reorganisation which are akin to communism. Born in penury he had to earn his livelihood since he was nine years of age. He was a shop assistant with a grocer and was later employed in the Customs Department for 14 years in Thana, Kolaba and Ratnagiri districts. But he gave it up, never married, performed penance in the Saptashringi hills and decided to devote his life to the service of his fellowmen. In his review of Marathi literature published between 1818 and 1864, Ranade has prominently mentioned Vishnuboa's *Vedokta Dharmaprakash* as 'the work indicative of any healthy departure in this connection' i.e. in the field of religious and philosophical literature. It is remarkable that it was published before the publication of Dayanand Saraswati's *Satyarthaprakash* and the founding of the Arya Samaj.

Vishnuboa was against the caste-system and believed in the oneness of humanity. He was strongly criticised for, what was called, his eccentric behaviour but he did not care. In order to demonstrate that he did not believe in credal and religious differences he kept in his employ a Mussalman cook and ate food served by anybody. His name came to be mentioned even in the London papers like the *Illustrated London News* and the *Asiatic Review*. *Native Opinion* conducted by Rao Saheb Mandlik, *Prabhakar* of Bhau Mahajan, *Dnyanaprakash* and *Induprakash* wrote appreciative obituaries about him. Although he wrote chiefly in Marathi, his appeal was not only all-India, but universal. He had specially got translated into English his tract on good government by Bal Bhaskar Shintre, Translator to the High Court and approved by Captain Phelps in 1869 and had 10,000 copies of it distributed to a number of people in India and England. They included members of Parliament, members of the British Cabinet, Queen Victoria



and the Prince of Wales, who later became King Edward VII.

Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh *alias* Lokahitawadi was Ranade's senior by about 20 years. He was born in 1823 and passed away in 1892 i.e. about a year before Ranade was appointed a judge of the Bombay High Court. Deshmukh belonged to a Sardar family associated with the last Peshwa. His father Haripant had the enjoyment of his *jagir* till he died, but the East India Company Government gave only some annuities to his three sons till they were able to look after themselves. Deshmukh retired in 1879 with full appreciative honours for he was enrolled a First Class Sardar, appointed additional member of the Governor's Council, allowed an annuity of Rs. 5,000, plus Rs. 200 as political pension which was stopped when he entered Government service. His father died in 1836. In 1841 he began his English education and in 1844 he began his service as a Translator in the office of the Deccan Sardars and Inamdars. He rose rapidly by dint of his ability, becoming a munsiff, assistant Inam Commissioner and sessions judge. He retired in 1879 when he was drawing a salary of Rs. 1,350. While in service he was made a Rao Bahadur in 1877 at the time of the Delhi Durbar.

In 1884, he was appointed Dewan of Ratlam State. His service took him to Gujarat and Rajasthan besides many places in Maharashtra. While in Gujarat he appears to have given shape to public life there. He wrote Gujarati books including the history of Gujarat. His contribution to the general awakening of Gujarat's public conscience is still remembered and as evidence of it one can still see his portrait in the hall of the Vidya Sabha at Ahmedabad. He was sessions judge at Nasik when Ranade was transferred there and they became quite intimate. In his career he was ceaselessly working; writing for newspapers and periodicals, and producing books was his favourite work. He tackled various subjects and all the time his aim was that the people should benefit by his work. He had remarkable powers of observation and he went on noting things as they occurred to him. In 1861 he was preparing a digest of Hindu and Muslim law and in the midst of that work he came to know the weak points of these two communities. Since then he was given to meditation on his observations and experiences. He was associated with the *Dnyanapraksah*, the *Induprakash* and the *Lokahitavadi* and constantly wrote in them. In 1866, his writings were collected in a thousand-page volume which

included, among other writings, his famous '100 letters'. He was intellectually in favour of reform but in his personal life he remained an adherent of all orthodox ways. During his lifetime, he was subjected to severe criticism for his inconsistencies and his work on the Inam Commission made him rather unpopular. Even Ranade and the *Times of India* had to indulge in adverse comments on his work in that capacity. Chiploonkar and Mandlik were quite outspoken in their criticism of him as a public man. He wrote often on the political future of this country, pleading for representation of Indians in the British Parliament and also suggested a number of administrative reforms in order to ensure good government.

However, he firmly believed that the British advent in India was positively a good and beneficent influence. He wrote much to deprecate the defects and deficiencies and demoralisation of his own people. Thus, in fine, he was one of those who welcomed British domination, pleaded for India's progress with the aid of the British and strove to awaken his fellowmen to the new situation. In his essay on the growth of Marathi literature, Ranade included only one of Deshmukh's books among the sixty that he has enumerated as worthy books showing the power of the Marathi language to express new thoughts. Perhaps this is suggestive of his disapproval of the bulk of what Deshmukh wrote but it must be remembered that Ranade wrote his review in 1862 and Deshmukh wrote a great deal after that year which could not find a place in the review. The chosen book was *Prithviraj Chavan*.

Another important personage who was born in 1827 and was therefore older than Ranade by about 15 years and died in 1890 i.e. three years before Ranade became a High Court Judge and went to Bombay, was Jyotirao Govindrao Phule. His work was much the same as Deshmukh's, but while Deshmukh's appeal was more to the white-collared i.e. the traditionally literate communities of Maharashtra, Phule's appeal was addressed to the so-called low classes, the depressed classes and women in the Hindu society of Maharashtra. He did active work in their behalf by starting a rescue home and a school. While Deshmukh came of a high Brahmin family, Phule came of a peasant stock and practised the profession of a florist. His family hailed from a village called Kadgun in Satara District. His great-grandfather killed a Brahmin Kulkarni, incensed by his inhuman craft in penmanship and fled to Poona. In the last days of the Peshwa rule his father was entrusted with the work



of supplying flowers and perfumes to the last Peshwa and on that account his original family name Gorhe came to be substituted by Phule. In the early British period, Phule secured, somehow, the benefit of going to school. In his very young years he was fascinated by the vigorous and valorous careers of Shivaji and George Washington about whom he read in his books and entertained ideas about rising in revolt against the British *raj*. But he shed that attitude completely very soon and became an inveterate enemy of Brahmin dominance and their evil ways to maintain it. He interpreted all history of Brahmins through that coloured glass and practically became a victim of Brahminphobia. The converse of his anti-Brahmanism was his espousal of the downtrodden and depressed classes and women and his earnestness in all that he wrote is obvious.

Phule's main achievement is the establishment of the Satyashodhak Samaj out of which, later, grew the vigorous and venomous non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra. His war on caste and championship of the depressed, downtrodden and outcastes was undoubtedly a progressive influence but it was too one-sided to be wholly in conformity with reality. His tirades against Ranade, the Sarvajanik Sabha and the Indian National Congress were unjustified. He perceived the exploiter in the Brahmin priest and the Kulkarni, the Gujarati and Marwari shopkeeper, bania and moneylender, the Mussalman and Parsi liquor vendor but he was totally innocent of any knowledge about the British imperialist exploiter. Such was his extraordinary comprehension, but Ranade must have been struck by some of his radical readings of social situations and the remedies he prescribed for their improvement.

Dadabhai Naoroji was mostly in England but he was in constant contact with his Indian friends in Bombay like Shapurji Sorabji Bangalee, Jagannath Shankarshet and others and it is not possible that Ranade was not aware of his activities in his college days as a student and a teacher. In later life Dadabhai and other Congress leaders became quite intimate with Ranade and Dadabhai's share in the formation of Ranade's mental attitude scarcely needs elaboration. They became colleagues and collaborators in the work of the Indian National Congress, whether openly or from behind the scenes, being immaterial.

This brief survey of the careers of the celebrities some of whom lived before Ranade and some who were his contemporaries helps to

conjure up the atmosphere of the era that preceded Ranade's birth and was partly conterminous with his growth. The spirit of the era was illustrated also by a number of events and so they have also to be briefly studied in order to evaluate their influence on the formation of his mental make-up. His mind had already become receptive to imbibe the spirit of this era as his writings and speeches of his student days clearly testify. He became widely known by his advocacy of widow marriage but that was only one of the many good things he said. His interest in public matters could be traced to 1859. He read a paper on duties of the educated young in that year under the auspices of an association which was known as Dnyanaprasarak Sabha. Among the sponsors of this association were Dr. Bhau Daji, Rao Saheb Mandlik, Govindrao Madgaonkar and others. Like Ranade, his contemporaries Kirtane, Gadgil Parmanand, Wagle, Kunte, Pathak and Modak also joined it and read papers from time to time. In 1860 he read a paper on Mahratta princes, Jagirdars and Inamdars. In 1863, he compared in a paper the Mahrattas and the Bengalees and their past and future. In 1864 he read a paper on the evil effects of uncontrolled growth of population. The very subject that he chose for his discourses indicate how his mind was working and what reforms he must have advocated. He was keenly studying what was happening in his time and what had happened before, and since, the advent of the British and his mind became rich with ideas.

What had happened before him? British rule was slowly but steadily shaping our life and its conditions. Ever since 1791, laws were being enacted and implemented which affected the time-honoured customs and traditions of the Hindus and the Mussalmans which were considered religious. When Ranade saw the light of day, a number of Hindu practices had become unlawful. In 1829 *Sati* had been abolished. In 1832, a law was passed which entitled converts from one creed to another to ancestral property. In 1840, the Jagannath Puri Devasthan was regularised by special legislation, because much confusion, evil practices and extortion by the Devasthan priests had become rampant there. In 1843 slavery was declared unlawful. In 1836 the Thugs were exterminated and manslaughter for any reason was made punishable. Suicides in the name of spiritual welfare prevailed in many places but that was stopped. Some of these so-called religious practices were obviously inhuman and monstrous and their abolition was naturally



not opposed by the people and perhaps a general satisfaction was experienced at the coming of the new dispensation. New judges were not conversant with the Hindu and Mohamedan law and they gave their decisions in consonance with the general principles of equity and justice, not caring whether they violated extant Hindu and Muslim religious practices or not. Case law thus began to develop and precedents of the new era began to gain the sanctity of law that was enforceable. The Penal Code which was framed in 1860 is full of the breaches of what the *smritis* or the *shariyat* contained. As a student of law, Ranade saw that this was a benevolent influence in the regulation of Indian social life and deserved to be welcomed by those who desired social reform.

The activities of the Christian missions also stirred people. It is true that they did a great deal of humanitarian and philanthropic work by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and helping the needy but behind all this good work, there was the constant desire to secure as many people as possible to embrace Christianity. Some of the missionaries even resorted to foul and crooked means to get such recruits. Their determination and perseverance were enviable. Wherever there were crowds and congregations for one reason or another, the Christian missionaries were bound to be found preaching virtues of Christianity and denouncing Hinduism and Islam. The first Marathi journal called *Dnyanodaya* was published in Bombay by the missionaries. They invited young Hindus under their influence to write on such topics as idol-worship and Hindu customs and traditions and gave prizes for good efforts. These men were soon found in their flocks after baptism and they were employed as decoys to get more converts. Not a few among them were Brahmins.

There was no doubt whatever that the Christian missionaries had marked out a number of real shortcomings of the Hindu and Muslim communities such as child-marriage, ban on widow marriage, the *pardah* system, looking upon women as an inferior sex, etc. Hindus and Muslims justified all these in the name of their religious injunctions while as a matter of fact religion had nothing to do with their maintenance. The criticism made by the Christian missionaries set the newly English educated Indians athinking and they soon found that their social and religious ideas and customs and traditions needed drastic revision and a new orientation. Ranade was by no means the first to think along these lines but

he was very much alive to what was happening all round him and he held firmly the opinion that social reform must come soon and come consciously. Before him, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in Bengal and Balshastri Jambhekar, Jagannath Shankershet, Gopalrao Deshmukh, Dadoba Pandurang and others had come to the same conclusion. Even as a child and young boy Ranade had seen so much of immorality and evil practices in the name of religion at Kolhapur and in his own Brahmin community that his impressionable mind was greatly touched by it all and it was already made up in favour of women's education, equality of sexes, freedom for widows to remarry, stoppage of child marriages and unequal marriages, reform of religious authorities and failing that their abolition, reform of sacred places, abolition of caste, etc. Life in Bombay only strengthened his inclinations.

Dadoba Pandurang had brought into being a secret society whose name was Paramahansa Sabha. Abolition of caste and idol worship were its main objectives and encouragement to widows to remarry was also an additional objective. The members met once a week. Their meetings started and ended with prayers. Baba Padmanji, an educated convert to Christianity was one of its members. He wrote his autobiography entitled *Once Hindu, Now a Christian* in which he has given an account of this society. In order to show that the members did not observe caste restrictions, they used to partake of a loaf of bread prepared in a Christian bakery and take water from the hands of a member of any caste. Bhau Daji and Bhau Mahajan, editor of *Prabhakar*, were among its members but since these people believed in working secretly and getting members for the society, not much progress was made and when one of its disloyal members published a list of the whole membership, the Sabha dispersed for all time. This happened about two years after Ranade was in Bombay. The members did not have the courage to work in the open. All the same, this Sabha was the nucleus of the future Prarthana Samaj.

In 1861, Gopalrao Deshmukh came to Bombay. Wherever he went, he set afoot some activity for public good. In Bombay he started, with the help of friends like Vishnushastri Pandit and Janardan Sakharam Gadgil, the Anglo-Marathi daily *Induprakash*. Ranade may not have been its organiser but everyone of them hit upon Ranade to run its English columns, Vishnushastri Pandit



was its editor. This paper was devoted to the cause of all-sided reform, but its main emphasis was on social reform. He was a great champion of the cause of widows and later himself married a widow, showing that in his case precept and example went together. Ranade wrote for the *Induprakash* for only four months, but later he frequently contributed to the columns of that paper. He was then working as Fellow of the Elphinstone College. Referring to his work for the *Induprakash* in an indirect way in the report of his work as a Fellow he said : "From November 23rd, 1862 to March 23rd, 1863, a period of four months, the serious part of my daily working hours was employed in the discharge of private and public duty which I need not name here. It was my first attempt of the kind and I have the proud pleasure of having done it to the satisfaction of my friends. It took nearly four hours of my day. About the close of March, I ceased to have any responsible connection with that work."

One article which Ranade wrote during this short period attracted the attention of all. It referred to the centenary of the battle of Panipet fought between the last Mussalman invader of India, Ahmed Shah Abdali and the Mahrattas. What he said in it has been lost to us as no old files of *Induprakash* are available. It is interesting to notice that most of the leading lights of Western India had at one time or other in their life been attracted to journalism because they found that a journal was the most convenient medium through which to approach and appeal to the people. Ranade was no exception. He had fully realised the power of the press and so throughout his life he made as much use of the press as of the platform to propagate his views. In one of his essays written during his undergraduate days Ranade has described the power of the press with great gusto. He said : "Ah, what a powerful redresser of people's wrongs ! What a patent incentive to all kinds of goodness ! What a terror unto kings and unto those who feed upon the ignorance of the people ! What a powerful engine in man's hand !" No files of the *Induprakash* are available now but some of the reminiscences that his contemporaries wrote after his death afford some indication as to how he was handling his pen. Once he expressed doubt about the number of deaths as given out by the Railway authorities in an accident after the trains began to cross over the Bhor Ghat. That led to controversy but the Commission of Inquiry confirmed Ranade's doubts. On another

occasion he commented against the reported insolent behaviour of a British Official of Ahmednagar. This led to a general instruction being issued by the Government to Officers asking them to be civil to the people. Ranade could not have been an unrestrained writer, but his writings seem to have been rather caustic in his early career. This was the beginning of his life as a publicist.

Ranade wrote about a number of things, but he became famous because of his advocacy of widow marriage. In 1862 i.e. the year in which the *Induprakash* was started, there took place one widow marriage but since it was secretly performed it did not cause a sensation. But three years after this journal was started, there was founded an association for the specific purpose of encouraging widow marriages. Vishnushastri Pandit was continually advocating this reform. The Chief of Jamkhandi and Sardar Madhaorao Vinchurkar enlisted their names among its founders. Vishnushastri Pandit became its Secretary and Ranade a prominent member. The Shankaracharya of Karvir was then camping at Ratnagiri, where some advocates of this reform asked him whether marriage of widows was consistent with Hindu Dharmashastra. The Shankaracharya only left Ratnagiri instead of replying in the affirmative or negative. But in retaliation to Vishnushastri Pandit's association, another association which was opposed to this reform had come into existence in Bombay with the support of orthodox Shastris and Pandits. A challenge was given to Vishnushastri to prove in a public discussion that widow marriage was lawful. He accepted the challenge and behind him were such learned and public-spirited men as Deshmukh, Ranade, Talekar Shastri, Vishnu Moreshwar Bhide and others. They went from place to place and propagated their cause singly or collectively. The orthodox section decided to take the matter to the Shankaracharya and have it finally decided, because Vishnushastri Pandit did not merely confine his efforts to discussion. He announced that a certain widow was ready to marry again and the marriage would soon be publicly solemnised.

A few days later an invitation over the signature of seven men including Ranade and Vishnushastri Pandit was issued and the orthodox association realised that what they were inclined to construe as a threat was about to materialise. A message was sent to the Pandit that he should first cite the sanction of the Hindu Dharma-shastra for widow marriage and then proceed to perform the one he had given notice of. A meeting was convened by the orthodox



association. It was attended by Ranade, Bal Mangesh Wagle and others. They were asked to postpone the marriage but since it was already fixed for June 15, 1869, that could not be put off. Soon the friendly talk developed into hot conversation and ultimately, a skirmish ensued. The orthodox party charged Ranade, Wagle and others with rioting and a complaint was filed in a criminal court. But nothing came out of it and the magistrate warned both parties not to regard the dismissal of the suit as a victory for either. Vishnushastri began to receive unsigned letters threatening him with dire consequences. Some people personally warned him that he was risking his life by taking up the cause of Hindu widows. Pandit complained to the police and those people had to furnish personal securities. At last the contemplated widow marriage was duly solemnised with much *eclat*. Hundreds of people belonging to all communities attended it. The presents received by the married couple, Venu Paranjpe and Pandurang Karmarkar, at Moroba Kanhoba's house went up to Rs. 3000. This sum was kept in a bank in the bride's account. Thus the orthodox party was completely discomfited.

The defeated party felt very sour at its discomfiture, but it could do nothing about it. The time-honoured remedy against what it considered irreligious and immoral conduct was ostracism, a general social boycott of those who were concerned directly or indirectly in this marriage. The party was not sure whether this would lead to libel action by the victorious party but Nanabhai Haridas, a well known Hindu lawyer who had become a High Court Judge assured the orthodox party that social ostracism or ex-communication was not punishable by the British Courts and therefore steps were taken by the orthodox party to enforce it. A public meeting was held in Bombay and a resolution was passed that all concerned with this widow marriage should be ex-communicated. The Shankaracharya confirmed this sentence by issuing an edict. Directly affected were the seven men, including Pandit and Ranade, who had issued invitations to the marriage, the bride and the bridegroom and the bride's two brothers. Numerous people had participated in the wedding feast. They were also to be boycotted. A similar meeting was held in Poona and it was followed by meetings in several important centres of Maharashtra. When public declarations of this boycott were made from place to place Pandit had counter-declarations made and got them stuck in public places like bills pointing out that

there was nothing irreligious or immoral in widow marriage and it was perfectly in consonance with the injunctions of the *smritis*. He also declared that he was prepared to cite the support of the *smritis* in favour of his position and enter into wrangling with anyone on that point.

This challenge was taken up by Vithoba Anna Daftardar, a pious old Pandit of Karad and a preacher of great repute. But before a face-to-face discussion could take place both parties went on carrying propaganda in favour of their sides and the whole of Maharashtra was convulsed by this propaganda. Bombay and Poona were the principal scenes of this verbal war. Ranade was engaged in writing to educated people in various centres in Northern India about these developments and enlisting support to the cause of widow marriage on an all-India scale. Ranade, Deshmukh, Wagle and Gadgil visited several centres and spoke on this subject. The Baroda and Gwalior princes sided with the orthodox party and their Durbar shastris naturally were ranged against widow marriage whether they thought it to be right or wrong being immaterial. While all this was happening, it was decided with the consent of both the parties that a public and systematic discussion should be held in the presence of the Shankaracharya, in which each party should argue its case. This discussion was held in March 1870 at Poona for nine days. Five advocates on each side were present. Every small point was discussed threadbare. About 200 people from Benaras, Nagpur, Satara, Nasik, Sangli, Bombay, Indore, Baroda and Gwalior had gathered at Poona as audience of the discussion. Besides all notables of Poona, a large crowd listened to the debate with rapt attention. The leader of the party in favour of widow marriage was Vishnushastri Pandit and the opposition was led by Narayanacharya Gajendragadkar. Pandit had Bhandarkar, Ranade and Gadgil for his colleagues while Gajendragadkar's principal colleague was Vithoba Anna Daftardar and five others. Gopalacharya Karadkar of Gwalior was *Sarpanch* who was required to give his final decision in case there was a tie.

The orthodox party brought undue pressure on one of the Shastris of the opposite party and the majority of the *panchas* went against it. The *Sarpanch* was not required to exercise his right of giving a casting vote. There was much controversy in the *Dnyanaprakash* on this question of voting under duress and some defamation suits followed. But the edict of ex-communication



was apparently so serious that about 200 people led by Prof. Kero Lakshman Chhatre apologised and they were mercifully treated by the Shankaracharya. The only people who did not seek such mercy were the seven men who had sent marriage invitations over their signatures. But even from among these Deshmukh was required to go through a purificatory rite because otherwise his married daughter's life threatened to be unhappy, but by no means did he recant. He reaffirmed his faith in the justness and equity of widow marriage by publishing a signed letter in the *Induprakash* even after going through the *prayaschitta*.

Some interesting side-lights might be thrown on this discussion. Krishnashastri Chiploonkar was one of the *panchas* selected. But objection was raised that he used to eat fruit and take tea with his English friends and therefore he was unfit to act as a *panch* unless he went through a purificatory rite. So he went through it and was permitted to act as *panch*. Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar's name was proposed as another *panch*. But as he belonged to the Goud Saraswat Brahmin community which traditionally had fish as part of their food, he was congenitally unfit to be a *panch*, however unquestionable his erudition as a Sanskrit scholar might be ! Like Deshmukh even Ranade was subjected to much persecution but he managed to go without any performance of a purificatory rite. But how severe life became for him could be gathered from a letter which he wrote to Sir William Hunter on August 1, 1886. Ranade said that his widowed sister was staying with him in Bombay. Her husband's family took her away and they would not let her see him for months together. She could see him only stealthily. His Brahmin cooks left him one after another for fear of ex-communication by fellow-Brahmins. He was not invited to any social function. The ladies of his household were insulted if they went to the temples. Everyone avoided them. If there was a death in the family, it became a matter of difficulty to see to postmortem obsequies, etc. Many marriage settlements were broken because of this boycott commotion. Every city and village had its outcastes. Yet he did not give up what he thought was the correct path and many more marriages of widows were also brought about.

Ranade mentions in the same letter that when he went to Poona in 1871 his father came to stay with him. Ranade was careful to see that his father should not have to suffer on his account and so

he never dined with him in the same row. He used to sit aside like an outcaste in his own house. Ranade's conduct in submitting to his father's wishes in the matter of his second marriage becomes inexplicable in view of his firmness in these days but it is true that he was absolutely sincere in what he was doing on both occasions. Ranade wrote a comprehensive essay on 'Widow Marriage : Pros and Cons' during these days and his study shows how deeply he had gone into Vedic, Puranic and Smriti literature to make out his case. He suffered for some time but the edge of the boycott soon wore off and opinion steadily veered round to favour widow marriage reform. This movement happened to be only a spear point of the general campaign for the women's liberation movement, claiming equality before law, provision for their education like that of men, raising their marriageable age, etc. Vishnushastri Pandit and Ranade pleaded for all this in the *Induprakash*.



## IV

### CONFIRMED THEIST

PERHAPS RATHER difficult and therefore a trifle unconvincing among Ranade's dissertations are his theological writings and sermons. There is no doubt, however, that he presents himself to us, through them and his daily behaviour, as the most convinced and confirmed of theists, and presumably he carried a considerable proportion of his audience with him. There is nothing mystical or mystifying about his expression on most matters but when he is in the theological domain, he strikes at least some people as a mystic, entirely unembarrassed and at ease, wholly unconcerned whether he has carried conviction or not. He wrote his essay, entitled "A Theist's Confession of Faith", in 1872, a year after he was stationed at Poona as a judge, his review of Dadoba Pandurang's *Reflections on the Works of Swedenborg* in 1879 and gave his address on "Philosophy of Indian Theism" at Wilson College, Bombay, in 1896. He delivered besides, numerous sermons at the Prarthana Samaj Mandir, Bombay and Poona, forty-six of which have been collected in a Marathi book. These publications constitute the sources for studying Ranade's views regarding God and Religion and man's relationship with both. His position in all these writings is substantially the same.

Ranade takes it for granted that certain problems are beyond solution by the human intellect — problems like the origin of the world and of man, the relations between man and his creator and the whole creation. In his essay on "Philosophy of Indian Theism" he says : "All the proof that we can attain to in religious matters is that of practical, moral conviction. It is just possible that practical or moral conviction is all that is needed and therefore attainable by the human mind in its search after the Absolute and in that case, the demand for logical proof may itself be an unreasonable demand." He also seems to think that the utilitarian value of the

concept of God is very great. Writing in the *Sarvajanik Sabha Journal* in 1882, in a note on Prof. Selby's lectures on Butler's *Analogy and Sermons*, he says : " Belief in the moral government of the Perfect Being and in the immortality of the soul have made civilised man what he is at present found to be and whatever may be the case with a few great thinkers, mankind generally can be saved only by this saving faith ".

Not only in all the theological but also other writings and speeches of Ranade, one does not come across any passage anywhere, where his firm faith in God has swerved even a little. His mind is very conveniently and comfortably adjusted to the Infinite and Absolute. His position thus is substantially the same in the " Philosophy of Indian Theism " in 1896 as in his " A Theist's Confession of Faith " of 1872. He frankly recognises that the human intellect is limited and it can never solve certain riddles. His practical trend leaves him undisturbed when he is faced with insoluble conundrums and he dismisses them as purely speculative. He found himself quite often in perfect tune with the Infinite, the Unfathomable and the Absolute. As the late Rao Bahadur Mahajani wrote once in a reminiscence: "Ranade's paramount and fundamental characteristic was his exceptional devotion to God. In an intimate conversation, he once told me that he often had the feeling that at the end of a long tube God was speaking to him and at the other end he was listening to Him. It is no wonder that one who experienced such an emotional trance had his whole life highly spiritualised."

Opportunity for religious exposition was always very dear to Ranade's heart and so he never declined an invitation to preach and pray. Mrs. Ranade has graphically described in her introduction to the book of his religious sermons in Marathi her experience as a member of Ranade's congregation. She said: " As soon as the love-laden and soothing voice began to flow, the deeps of my heart would well up, my mind would become intent and in a moment I would forget everything and hope and faith would dominate my whole being. Sometimes I felt and I shared the experience with many others, that I was experiencing the very bliss of Heaven. The devotional and religious thoughts awakened in the heart would linger for long in the mind after the service was over." During her tours with her husband while he was administering the Deccan Ryots Relief Act to four districts of Maharashtra, she had similar experiences as Ranade rose early in the morning and started his



prayers. Even Gokhale once said that he had never heard anything richer in his life than some of Ranade's sermons. It may be stated here that Gokhale had passed through a phase of agnosticism even if later he became a believer and regarded Universal Love as the best and surest manifestation of God.

The late Rao Bahadur G. V. Joshi said, "He (Ranade) was one of the most religious of men and what most struck and impressed me during my association with him was his simple, exalted and fervent piety. He always seemed to feel that he was in the presence of the Almighty, a humble servant doing his appointed task as best he could and with the light of faith that was vouchsafed to him. He viewed thieves with the eye of faith and saw God everywhere. He saw Him in Nature, in human life and human history. He traced his hand in every movement of the great drama of the world's life and looked on the solemn march of events as but a fulfilment of His Providential purpose. Moreover he was a firm believer in the moral government of God, in the justice, beneficence and mercy of Heaven. He had in the language of Wordsworth 'an assured belief that the procession of our fate, however sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being of infinite beneficence and power, whose everlasting purposes embrace all accidents converting them to good'." His deepest ideas readily expressed themselves in a religious form and his heart was perennially attuned to the warm emotion of religious thoughts. A demonstration of religious faith and devotion affected him deeply. One day in 1882, he was sitting in the Poona Library, when a procession of pilgrims on their way to Pandharpur was passing by, the pilgrims shouting at the top of their voice their devotional songs. Attracted by the noise they made, he looked out of the window and the scene of the devotees' nearly frenzied behaviour moved him to tears, which kept trickling down his cheeks for several minutes, as recorded by Rao Bahadur Mahajani in one of his reminiscences.

Ranade's reaction to any attempt at ousting religion from human life was always strong and even vehement. In an article contributed to the *Sarvajanik Sabha Journal* on Prof. Selby's Notes on Butler's *Analogy and Sermons*, he took the professor to task for endeavouring to land his students on "the dreary alternative of agnosticism, which the young students are taught to accept as the final word of science on the grave mysteries of life and thought and man's hope of personal communion with God, are laughed away to make

room for an inane faith in evolution and the law of collective development and progress . . . Hindu students especially need the strengthening influence which faith in God and in Conscience as His voice in the human heart alone can give. The national mind cannot rest in agnosticism. The experiment was tried once on a large scale by the greatest moral teacher of this or any other age. The failure of Buddhism is a warning that such teaching can have no hold on national thought."

Another example of Ranade's championship of religion may be given here. The occasion was the Deccan College annual gathering over which the late Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar presided. His address was a plea for purity of heart which he said was unattainable without the aid of culture that religion provided. Agarkar hotly contested the point and declared that all discussion of religion was a futile frittering away of energy and that religion was not an essential part of human culture. Tilak equally vigorously supported Agarkar. Ranade could not bear this. He intervened in the debate to aver that religion was a speciality of India and she would never follow the agnostic teachings of Mill, Spencer and Sidgwick. He regretted that some Indians were impressed with their teachings forgetting that if there was anything dearer than life to India, it was religion. This did not pacify the young rebels and his speech was interspersed with a sally of sneering obstructions. He apologised for having used hard words but they would break no bones, he said, if what he had said had made his audience realise the importance of religion as a great solace and aid to life.

In his *Philosophy of Indian Theism*, he has propounded the theistic interpretation of the universe as against materialism, egoism, pantheism and agnosticism. It purports to be founded on Dr. A. C. Fraser's lectures on philosophy of theism. Fraser applied himself to the consideration of the questions: Whence? Whither? Why? — Whence we have come, whither we are going and what is the purport of this pilgrim's progress. These questions have engaged the attention of man in all ages and all countries. In Ranade's opinion, the different interpretations that have been offered of the problem of existence can be reduced to three postulates: the 'ego' or the 'I' (the human soul); the 'non-ego' or the 'not-I' (matter) and the Infinite which underlies all currents of thought, all systems of philosophy. Some maintain the existence of these three, some of two only and others of only one i.e. the Infinite or 'Universal



Soul'. Idealists, Materialists and Spiritualists respectively maintain the supremacy of the ego or the human soul, the non-ego or matter, and the Infinite. Since men and animals are only passing shows, the reality of matter can well be affirmed. Hence, some philosophers hold that matter is the ultimate cause of everything we see around us. The different phenomena we see in animate or inanimate nature are only the results of the constant transformation of the molecules of matter. In reality, however, we know nothing beyond the impressions matter produces on our minds and the impressions last only as long as the perceiving mind lasts. Therefore, there is no reason to assign real existence to matter, especially when it is perceived that man is superior not only to the inanimate nature but also to the animate world by possessing freedom of will and a sense of responsibility and duty. So, it would not be erroneous to transfer supremacy and reality to the human soul which never dies even on the dissolution of its earthly tenement.

When materialism is thus found to be unable to explain causation and the futility of its explanations of consequence by means of a causal assemblage of atoms chancing to evolve order out of chaos, Ranade says : "*Homo mensura* becomes the rule of thought. It is a useful guide within certain limits, but when pushed too far, becomes self-destructive. I think, therefore, I am (*Cogito Ergo Sum*) may account for my belief in my own existence, but affords no ground for my belief in the existence of the outside world, in its permanence apart from my changing consciousness about it. Yet the permanence of the external world is an essential condition of the formation of Science. How can scientific truths have any value if they have no foundation in the external world but only in the brain of the thinker who thinks them out? This is the final outcome of the philosophy which makes the individual the final and only measure of being. It leads to the collapse of man's moral nature when no relationship is said to subsist between one soul and another. The human mind can never be satisfied with this result viz. that the world and other sentient beings were there when he was not and will continue to be when he will not be."

Being thus dissatisfied with the theory which would assign predominance to Nature or to Man in the scheme of the Universe, the human mind seeks refuge in the Supreme Spirit which can be the only real existence of which Man and Nature are manifestations and which underlies and rules all phenomena. It has been accepted

as such by almost all systems of philosophy and religion as the 'Father of all, in every age and every clime, adored by saint, by savage and by sage ; Jehoah, Jove or Lord '. The system which makes the Supreme Spirit the first and governing principle of the Universe, possesses advantages which the other systems cannot boast of in that it affords a satisfactory explanation of the infinity of matter and force with which we are surrounded and dispenses with the necessity of explaining the origin of things and the problems of creation or evolution. It also is a higher, nobler and truer conception of the Supreme Existence than could be found in many religious creeds which separate God from Nature and Man and represent Him to be a Being among other beings, only more powerful and wiser than they.

"We can never demonstrate logically our reasons for the faith that we feel," said Ranade in the lecture under consideration, "in the continuity of nature and the uniform operation of its laws. All science ultimately resolves itself into a product of our faith in the trustworthiness of an everchanging universe. This sense of trustworthiness is the slow growth of ages but it is none the less the basis of scientific truths as we apprehend them. If this basis of faith is not repudiated, it has legitimate claims upon our acceptance in the philosophy of the absolute." So, he argued, there is harmony between ourselves and nature, the connecting link between them being our faith in the uniformity of its laws. The operation of those laws tends to justify that faith. But the link not only connects us with nature but connects "us and nature alike with the infinite existence whose purposes, wisdom and benevolence, beauty and power are thereby disclosed to our eyes of faith and knowledge. Science thus holds the torch of faith to the mystery of religion." If this torch is extinguished, according to Ranade, Theism and Science both suffer.

Man, Nature and the Infinite may be considered separately but they are not disjointed parts of a mechanical whole, the third ruling and harmonising the first two. According to Ranade, the discovery of the subordination of the first two to the third is the business of philosophers, because the manifestations of wisdom and power, beauty and benevolence in the operations of nature proclaim the Author of the Universe not only to the most ignorant and the most learned but also the most sceptical. It has been represented by various races of mankind, according to their various stages of



civilisation, in various forms, varying from the grotesque and fantastic pictures of God that are painted in the numerous systems of idolatry and polytheism, to the refined, sublime and lofty notions of the deity that are found in the theistic systems of belief. With the progress of science and civilisation, such notions become more and more refined, till at last the Supreme Spirit comes to be regarded as immanent in everything and every being in the order and purpose which animates nature and which means reason, conscious mind and personal will.

What does Ranade mean by God being immanent in nature ? He means that the Divine Reality, actively regulating the purposes of law and order, beauty and benevolence, power and wisdom, through the so-called natural agents, which may be likened to the telegraphic wire through which messages are sent across time and space and deciphered by man, whether they are messages of science or religion. But it is not only nature that is supernatural in this view. Man can also claim such element in him by his possessing self-conscious reason and free volition which are his distinguishing features and are absent in the brute creation, where responsibility for action does not exist as it does in man. Ranade says : “ These distinguishing features of man are the foundation of all law and government, morals and manners, social and family arrangements, literary and scientific culture and finally of religion and worship and are the source of his highest glory and his greatest responsibility. Man thus occupies a higher place in the scale of beings. But his higher place has higher responsibilities attached to it. The sense of conscience in him, keeps him alive to these responsibilities, manifests the presence of the over-ruling Providence in him, serves as a medium of communion, as a connecting link between him and the Universal Spirit, affording him the greatest pleasure and satisfaction when he does his duty and chastising him with remorse when he fails to do it or goes wrong.”

All through his writings Ranade appeals to his students as a believer in and advocate of a refined and philosophic form of theism. He was a prominent member of the Prarthana Samaj and frequently prayed and preached from its pulpit. He did not personally believe in worship of idols, but he tolerated it among others and did not make a fetish of either. He did not even hesitate to go to temples for preaching where idols were worshipped, because he cared more about explaining his ideas than the place where they were

preached. As Gokhale once said : “ He wanted his ideas to reach his countrymen and he had no objection to going wherever they were assembled, provided he got an opportunity to speak to them. While preaching, he tried to make his addresses easily intelligible, profitable for everyday difficulties and problems. His texts could be from anywhere, the Bible, the Koran, the Upanishads or sayings from the various Saints and prophets including the Mahratta Saints — Tukaram, Ekanath, Ramdas, Namdeo and others. He did not think that this was inconsistent with his professed theism.” It would be interesting to enumerate how many times God has been invoked, not only in his religious sermons and tracts, but also in his political, social, economic and educational writings. His conviction was that God was his 24-hour companion and all that he was doing was done with Him as a constant witness.

Ranade perceived nothing new in the theistic movement which was started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and was developed by Keshav Chandra Sen under the name of Brahmo Samaj and was followed in Bombay under the banner of the Prarthana Samaj. In his opinion it was simply the latest protest against idolatry or polytheism and superstition and corrupt practices which had crept into the prevailing religion, obscured the knowledge of higher things, perverted notable precepts for the conduct of man in life, played fast and loose with the rules and restraints of morality and substituted a mere formal ceremonial for the earnestness of religious worship. He said such protests against the abuses of religion had been delivered from time to time from the Vedic to his own day, by the authors of some of the Upanishads who protested against the necessity and efficacy of sacrifices and boldly pronounced them to be boats too frail to carry a man through the ocean of misery to the haven of true happiness.

It would be appropriate to notice an address on Hindu Protestantism that Ranade delivered at the Bombay Prarthana Samaj in 1895 in which he referred to the work of the Mahratta poet-saints. He developed his ideas further and included them in a chapter in *The Rise of the Mahratta Power*. According to Ranade the poet-saints preached Bhagwat Dharma and the Prarthana Samaj was merely continuing their tradition although it was stigmatised by its critics as an organisation blindly copying the Christian Church. Ranade compared their work to that of Luther and Calvin, Knox and Latimer in Europe. He made it clear that he had based his



observations on the biographies of the saints written by Nabhaji, Udhav-Chidghan and Priyadas and made more familiar by Mahipati. About 100 saints and prophets are dealt with by Mahipati and about 50 of them hail from Maharashtra. Among them were ten women, ten Muslims, 40 non-Brahmins and 40 Brahmins. They included butchers, weavers, oilmen, gardeners, potters, goldsmiths, barbers, Mahars, princes and peasants, bankers and soldiers. Ranade regarded this as the most noteworthy feature of what he called the Protestant movement in India. Their work led to no wars, no bloodshed, no persecutions, no injunctions, no fines and no banishments. They worked silently as God's voice worked in them, silently but surely.

The protest of the saints consisted in challenging the supremacy of the Sanskrit language as a vehicle of learning and in enriching the stock in the language of the people ; secondly, their protest was raised against the tendency to exaggerate the importance of rites and ceremonies, which were after all symbols, but in practice they tended to obscure the religious vision and usurp the place of the purity of heart and true devotion for which they were intended as auxiliaries only ; thirdly, they protested against the hold which the *yoga* system of austerities and the supposed powers of performing wonders it conferred on the *yogi* ; fourthly, their work tended to lessen the rigour of caste ; fifthly, they worked against cruelty and impurity, against animal and human sacrifices, against the worship of cruel deities and *shakta* rites ; sixthly, although they worshipped in the name of some deity, they firmly believed in only one Supreme Being, one God, without a rival ; seventhly, they propagated the creed of a loving God, a living God, who spoke to and walked with and comforted the worshippers. Coming in contact with Muslims, they made converts of some of them which implied a unity of providence whether it was called Ram or Rahim.

Prof. James Kellock, a biographer of Ranade, has said that Ranade's ethical outlook and practice were so markedly Christian in their tendency that the old theologians would undoubtedly have dubbed him an example of *anima naturaliter Christiana*. He always maintained, however, that he was a Hindu and was proud of his Hindu ancestry and asserted that the Prarthana Samaj was not distinct from Hinduism but that it only sought to rid Hinduism of its false excrescences like idolatry, untouchability and caste. He had made a close study of all religions and he was

convinced that Hinduism was the most catholic of them all and ever ready to adapt to itself whatever it considered acceptable from all religious systems. He seized every opportunity of saying so. In September, 1891, a very learned Christian missionary called Dr. Pentecost delivered a series of 15 discourses at Poona in which his point invariably was to establish the supremacy of Christianity as the best faith, without embracing which there was no salvation for mankind. Ranade attended most of these lectures and greatly admired them, though he did not agree with all that the lecturer had said. At the instance of his friends he agreed to thank the lecturer and in his speech of thanks which lasted for three quarters of an hour, he surveyed the contributions of the Greek, Roman, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu faiths, touching several sects of Hinduism and ended by saying that Hinduism without its excrescences deserved to be the faith of all mankind. His speech was remembered for long and those who heard it did not know how they could express their admiration and reverence for Ranade.

A man of religion above everything else — that was Ranade and this phase of his character influenced all his activity. He more than fulfilled Gandhiji's definition of a man of religion. Gandhiji said : "A man who leads a dedicated life, who is simple in habits, who is the very image of truth, who is full of humanity, who calls nothing his own — such a man is a man of religion, whether he himself is or is not conscious of it." Agarkar or Gokhale fulfilled Gandhiji's tests, but Ranade's qualifications actually exceeded the requirements. He was an incorrigible theist ! In Ranade's scheme, though man is not freed from the authority of God, the conceptions of God and Religion are so recast that religious belief is founded on conscience and an individual is freed from the tyranny of textual authorities, the infallibility of prophets and the mediation of redeemers.



## V

### SEVEN YEARS IN POONA

FROM NOVEMBER 1871, Ranade's career in the educational department came to an end. He was a born teacher and even as a teacher he would have been unexcelled, had he remained a teacher all his life. Indeed, after he gave up teaching in a smaller sphere, he took up teaching in a wider field and as Tilak had observed in his obituary of Ranade, he became a master and a guide of the people at large. Technically, he remained in the judicial line from 1871 to 1901 i.e. till he died. He started as an acting first class First Grade Subordinate Judge and died as a High Court Judge. He was confirmed in his acting appointment in 1873. He was not even 30 then. It was the second highest office which a subordinate judge could ordinarily reach, but he was appointed to it at the very beginning of his judicial career. His jurisdiction in this office extended over all civil suits, of whatever value, and against all persons except the government. Government also gave him for the first time in his case authority to hear appeals on the decrees of the second class subordinate judges.

It is not surprising that the epithet Justice is inseparably associated with his name and he is always spoken of as Justice Ranade, but to attempt to exhaust his achievements in the capacity of a mere judge is tantamount to being insensible to far greater achievements of his in a number of other departments of human activity. He was a very conscientious worker as a judge as in every other position and his energy and executive capacity were so great that he is remembered more for his services in other fields than in government employment as a judicial officer. Thus he has been called the father of public life in Maharashtra, maker of modern India, prophet of liberated India, a builder of public men and institutions and as Gokhale once said "the Central sun from whom they derived their light and warmth and round whom they

moved each in his own orbit, and at his own distance. The feeling of devotion he was able to inspire in such men was most marvellous and to those young workers who were privileged to come in intimate personal contact with him, his word was law and his approbation their highest earthly reward."

Ranade's 22 years in Poona are most significant from this point of view. They cover his activities as the soul of the Sarvajanic Sabha and its quarterly journal and other varied activities of a public character. But perhaps it may be more convenient to review his private and social life during this period before turning to his public activities. Mrs. Ramabai Ranade's book of reminiscences is the best and the most reliable source for tracing these activities, although even her account of the first two or three years since Ranade came to Poona is second-hand. It will be remembered that Ranade was married at the age of 13 and when he came to Poona at the end of 1871, he had completed 28 years. His wife began to live with him in Bombay after she had come of age and about that time Ranade passed his B.A. and had accepted his first educational job. After Ranade came to Poona, she kept indifferent health and it was discovered that she had contracted consumption. She died in October 1873, in spite of Ranade's personal nursing and devoted service and left him in a very disconsolate state of mind for about a year. For seven years she and Ranade had lived together and her meek and charming disposition had won his heart. Her death, therefore, meant to him a severe shock. Ramabai says in her book of reminiscences that not a day passed for a year without bringing tears to Ranade's eyes on her account. In a condolence letter sent to Rao Bahadur G. A. Mankar, one of his biographers, he said : " My own loss has been equally bitter and at times these mishaps so puzzle one's understanding that the most devout are tempted into sinful despondency and disloyal rebellion. You are, however, too soundly grounded in virtue and piety to be shaken in your faith permanently, whatever may be the temporary shock you suffered. It is not good of friends to give permanent advice in this spirit. Such consolation is only liked when the heart, saddened by its loss, finds out the truth that the world was not intended to be a bower of roses." Ranade himself sought consolation in reading the devotional *abhangs* of Tukaram every night during these days, till he fell asleep.

The circumstances under which Ranade was married a second



time at the age of 32 to a girl of 12 who looked like his daughter were such as to make one conclude that he was an unwilling, yet consenting victim of an astutely laid conspiratorial design. The chief conspirator was his own father who had married a second bride within 16 days of the death of Ranade's mother. With the acquiescence of the other members of his family in his plans, he manoeuvred to place Ranade in such a situation that he felt compelled to give his consent to this obviously unequal marital alliance. Ranade was known to hold progressive views on social reform. One of the tenets of social reform was equality of the sexes and as a corollary of it, freedom to widows to marry again. He had advocated widow remarriage as perfectly legitimate and even given a helping hand in bringing about such marriages. His friends and colleagues in the Social Reform Cult naturally expected him to be loyal to his views and he would have come up to their expectations by choosing a suitable widow for marrying again or remaining single throughout life. His father was mortally afraid that he would marry a widow, as a result of pressure from his friends or of his own choice, and of this he had a religious horror.

Ranade's father would not take any chances. He was a man of a stern disposition and resolution. For some time, he managed to intercept Ranade's mail and saw to it that letters addressed to Ranade by his friends from Bombay did not reach him. He was in search of a bride for his son and was not prepared to wait for long. A friend of his named Madhavrao Kurlekar (Chiplunkar) from Satara District happened to come to Poona and on hearing that Ranade's wife was dead, he proposed his own daughter as bride for Ranade. Ranade's father was willing to accept the proposal provided the girl was approved by him or by some one enjoying his confidence. Accordingly, his family priest went to Mr. Kurlekar's place, because it was contrary to respectability that his daughter should be brought to Poona for inspection before it was finally agreed to perform the marriage ceremony. The family priest after two or three days' close inspection returned to Poona with the report that the girl was suitable. After this the girl was brought to Poona for the other members of the Ranade family to have a look at her. But that was a small formality. Ranade's father and the girl's father having agreed, it was decided that Ranade should be approached by the bride's father with his proposal and in case Ranade showed unwillingness to fall in with their plan the bride's

father should address him the ultimatum by saying that his refusal would mean an innocent girl's ruin, for such refusal would be construed by acquaintances, friends and relatives as a social stigma.

All these steps were taken without Ranade's knowledge. But one day Ranade's father told him that his friend Kurlekar had come to propose his daughter for being given to Ranade in marriage and that he had tentatively agreed to accept the proposal. Ranade was not prepared for being taken by surprise in this manner. By way of a mild protest he told his father that he was a grown-up man of over 30 and not a child and it was not fair to coerce him like that. On his father giving expression to his fear about Ranade probably marrying a widow, he offered solemnly to take a vow that he would not do that. Not only that, also he would never marry again. He even pleaded that when his sister's husband died, she was a young girl of 10 and no one cared to think of what would happen to her when all her life was before her but so much fuss was being made for his physical comforts and pleasure when it was not even two months since his wife was dead. Nothing availed and his father threatened an open breach if Ranade was not going to submit to the arrangements he had made. Ranade begged for six months' postponement as he was expecting to go to Europe. That was an additional argument for his father to hasten his plans. At last Ranade gave in and asked for only such favours as his father readily complied with. They were that the girl should not be altogether a child, that she should come of a respectable family and that no festivity should form part of the marriage ceremony ; it should only be a strict formal ritual. In this way Ranade went through this ordeal of a second marriage. He had not even taken leave on the day the marriage was solemnised. The ceremony was performed after he had returned from court as usual. That part of the agreement was completely observed by his father.

For long Ranade was subjected to much adverse criticism for having betrayed the cause of social reform. He was accused of maintaining a wide breach between precept and practice and it was freely said that like Ranade other people also had their parents and near relations whom they found difficult to displease and therefore the cause of social reform would never advance when espoused by leaders like him. He quietly put up with that storm with humility and never tried to justify himself. So it would be proper



to give a few more details in this connection. During the course of the interview his new bride's father had with him, he had clearly told him that he was not quite a young man and although he looked robust, he was hard of hearing and had a defective eyesight, that he was in favour of widow remarriage and foreign travel without going through any so-called purificatory functions after return from a voyage and possibly he had not considered that he was a misfit for alliance with an old, landed, aristocratic family. But the bride's father quietly said that he was aware of all that and he had come determined, in consultation with Ranade's father.

What weighed with Ranade while submitting to this coercion? He did realise that his father was obstinate and unreasonable. Yet he felt that it was his duty to respect his wishes. His father pointed out to him that after his death the responsibility of taking care of his family would devolve on Ranade and that the day may not be far off. He would not, therefore, like Ranade to remain single even for the six months or a year that he had asked and made it clear to Ranade that the peace of his mind and the happiness of his family would be ruined if Ranade wanted to have his own way. Ranade's father uttered his last word on the matter by giving him a warning that he could order out his personal life as he liked on pain of all relationship between father and son being cut off for good. He threatened to leave at once and stay permanently at Kolhapur, cutting out his prolonged visits every year to his son's residence at Poona. Ranade's affection for his father was so great that he gave up all resistance and submitted himself to his will exactly in the spirit in which the hero of the *Ramayana* had submitted to his step-mother's will, which was binding on his father or in the spirit of the great Bhishma of *Mahabharata* fame.

Howsoever other men and women might have judged Ranade's conduct and howsoever they might judge his conduct in future, Mrs. Ranade in her book of reminiscences has recorded her conviction in the most explicit words by saying that Ranade's behaviour in this episode was one of the brightest spots of his career. She says: "I believe that among all the examples of his self-sacrifice and magnanimity this is the brightest and most significant. However the world may judge him, my respect for him grows the more I think about it and all those who can sympathetically put themselves in his position would conclude that his conduct was right and his decision the only correct decision. It was entirely

in accord with his character.”

Mrs. Ranade has made the account of Ranade's reaction to his second marriage quite picturesque. Perhaps he experienced greater grief while going through this marriage than he felt for the loss of his dearly loved first wife. The whole affair was enveloped in gloom and disconsolation. There was not even the customary bridal procession home in the company of his new wife as all festivity was banned. The bride and the groom quietly walked home after the marriage was solemnised. As soon as he reached home, he shut himself up in his room and did not even take his evening meal. He had a feeling of being mortified. The ceremony was so hurriedly gone through that even the mother of the bride was not present on the occasion, much less any other friends and relatives. What was the purpose of their presence when there was to be no celebration of any kind?

A couple of days later, even the bride's father left Poona and the girl-wife found herself in a wholly new atmosphere. On the day her father left, Ranade sent for his wife on the terrace of their residence and asked her if her father had departed. She replied in the affirmative. Then he put it to her that she was married to him but probably she did not know who he was and what his name was. Ramabai was not such a simpleton. She said she knew their relationship and his name was Mahadev. Apparently she was not bashful while uttering his name as Hindu wives, whether young or old, used to be and still mostly are and Ranade found that quite satisfactory. He also asked if she knew reading and writing. The reply was in the negative. Ranade was now reconciled to the fact of his second marriage and confirmed optimist that he was, he decided to make the best of the situation and eventually he found that this unwanted and vexatious marriage, fortunately turned out to be quite happy indeed.

Ranade ordered a slate and pencil to be brought and that very day gave her the first lesson in Marathi alphabets. Ramabai took two hours to learn the first seven letters. But for about three months, Ranade regularly devoted two hours every night to coach her up and he was glad to find that she was able to read simple printed books. Later he found it difficult to devote so much time to this work and a woman teacher took charge of Ramabai's training. Ranade took three months' leave and went on an extensive tour of North India. After his return he found that not much



progress had been made. But under the instruction of another woman teacher, Ramabai finished her studies up to the fifth standard by the end of 1875. By the end of 1877, she finished her studies up to the seventh Marathi standard in all subjects and began to learn English after she went to Nasik with her husband where he was transferred in the beginning of 1878.

During these four years, Ramabai had to put up a very hard fight to get educated, because all the women of the Ranade household, though able to read and write themselves, were opposed to Ramabai learning so much and going to meetings and speaking at some of them. They looked upon it as bad manners and opposed to good old family traditions. They tried to persuade her to give up learning, cajoled her with a view to making her not to listen to what her husband asked her to do, ridiculed her and even treated her as some kind of a semi-outcaste or untouchable, but she put up with all this persecution. She firmly believed that her primary duty was to do what pleased her husband. He had enjoined on her one condition : not to make any rejoinders to the ladies of the household, however great the provocation to do so may be. She faithfully observed that condition and as a matter of fact it was Ranade himself who once and only once in his life lost control over his mind and said a word that was construed as an insult by an elderly lady of the household. When Ranade with his wife and a younger half-brother went to Nasik her persecution had a natural end, but these four or five years were spent by her under severe mental strain.

Some incidents touching on Ranade's private or semi-public life must be narrated to give an idea as to what this life was like. How devoted he was to his father has already been seen. In 1875, Vishnu Shastri Pandit, Ranade's colleague in Bombay when he was at college and editor of *Induprakash* to whose English columns Ranade contributed regularly for four months, married a widow. He stopped in Poona on his way to Mahableshwar. Ranade asked him to dinner and instructed his sister to prepare some nice dishes. Ranade's father was then stopping in Poona in connection with the thread-ceremony of one of Ranade's half-brothers. Other members of the family were also there. After Ranade had left for court, his father came to know about the plan of a party to Vishnu Shastri Pandit. He became very angry because it was going to be a party to one who had married a widow. He did not show his anger,

he only said to his wife and daughter that he would come late at night, that he did not propose to dine and the service at the dinner to Pandit should be exclusively left to Ramabai.

Ranade came to know about this from his sister and felt very uneasy. He could not sleep a wink during the night. His father had already declared that he wanted to leave immediately for Kolhapur in protest. As soon as he got up in the morning he went to see his father, but there was no exchange of a word. Each one thought the other should break the ice. Neither of them looked each other in the face. All this time Ranade was on his feet. At last his father asked him to sit down. Ranade said he would sit down only after father had told him that he had cancelled his plan of going to Kolhapur. He also apologised for what had happened but father said nothing. At last Ranade became impatient, was overwhelmed with emotion and exclaimed : " Obviously, I am an orphan since my mother died ". Saying this he began to sob and repaired to his room upstairs.

Ranade's father was moved but was pretending as if nothing had happened. A few minutes later Ranade sent him word that if he did not drop his plan of going to Kolhapur, he would send the resignation of his job and go with him to Kolhapur. This was the last straw on the camel's back. Father sent word to Ranade that he had changed his mind and therefore Ranade should at once bathe, take his meal and proceed to court as usual. Ranade was pacified and there was no such incident again in the Ranade household.

Another incident took place a few days later. It is highly expressive of Ranade's high sense of duty, humility and filial affection. Ranade was all gratitude to his father who had taken extremely good care of his welfare and education. He was much too generous a person and felt exhilarated in carrying on his shoulder the burdens of his friends and relatives and so had run into debts. The result was that he was not able to have a house of his own in Poona. Ranade not only defrayed all his debts but from his savings planned to purchase a house. Ranade's father was highly gratified to see that his son had ably managed to run the two establishments at Poona and Kolhapur, met all his needs and on top of that had saved enough to buy a house. Ranade requested him to draft the purchase deed. He did that but put Ranade's name as the purchaser. When Ranade saw the draft



he suggested only one change — that father's name should appear as purchaser instead of son's.

Ranade's father took a day to consider the matter before the deed was sent for registration. He called Ranade aside at night and said : " We have continued to remain a joint family for long firstly because the male members of the household have been strong and firm, but the other reason was that there was never any real property about whose division there could arise trouble. I am highly pleased that you have been enabled to own some by God's grace and so the purchase deed should rightly be in your name. Your younger brothers are minors and one does not know how they will turn out. So you should listen to what I say ." Ranade said : " I have given full consideration to all these aspects. I earnestly desire that this first real property should stand in your name and you should not turn down my request." Ranade's father gave in and Ranade had one of the greatest domestic felicities of his life.

A few days after Ranade's father had returned to Kolhapur, Ranade received news that his father was ill. A boil had grown on his back and it would not heal in spite of a good many days' treatment. Ranade took a month's leave and personally nursed his father. He extended his leave by another month but to no purpose. For another extension Ranade had to report himself on duty and then make a fresh application. It took 36 hours in those days to reach Poona from Kolhapur in a postal horse-carriage. Ranade promised to return quickly but his father would not let him go. The old man became a veritable infant. Dr. Sinclair who was treating him intervened and assured the old man that there was no harm in Ranade's going away for two or three days and then father agreed that he should go. But before Ranade left he expressed the fear that they might not meet again if Ranade was late in returning but assured him that he was fully confident that Ranade would carry out his filial obligations when the leadership of the family devolved on him after his death. Ranade reassured him and asked him not to worry at all. He was fully aware of the seriousness of the situation and therefore while leaving had asked the elderly ladies of the family and his sister to take special care of his step-mother.

As fate would have it, it took six days for Ranade to have his leave sanctioned, just when he received two telegrams, one after the other, one asking him to start at once because father was serious and the

other intimating to him the news of his death. Just as he was about to leave, he received the second telegram and so he changed his plan of going to Kolhapur. He had not the nerve to stand the aftermath of his father's death, which took place on February 20, 1877. To those family friends like the late Prof. Kero Lakshman Chhatre, Krishnashastri Chiploonkar and others who called on him to express their feelings of condolence, and asked him why he did not go to Kolhapur he said it in so many words that the after-death obsequies and the disfigurement of his mother etc. would be too much for him to bear witness to. But he told them that he had decided to dismantle the Kolhapur establishment, wind up all father's affairs and ask the whole family to move to Poona to stay with him for good. He arranged all these things accordingly and in about a month's time all the members of his father's household came to Poona. Ranade was particularly considerate to his step-mother who was younger than himself. Every evening he used to spend some time with her before dinner in order to console her and to let her feel that after her husband's death, she had not remained uncared for. Her two sons were nearly of the same age as Ramabai's and as she has said in her reminiscences the three of them became good companions under Ranade's kind supervision. The two brothers helped her in her lessons also.

Ramabai, though young, was gifted with great understanding. She had extraordinary patience, forbearance and tolerance. As a matter of fact, she was the mistress of the household in her capacity as the wife of the breadwinner of the family and had she been differently constituted, she would easily have been a source of great annoyance and unhappiness to Ranade, instead of the great comfort and support that she was. Besides implicitly following the advice her husband had given her about not submitting to the temptation of ever giving a retort to whatever the elderly ladies of the family said, she had also taken to heart the advice — which was really a warning — that her father had given her while saying good-bye to her after her marriage. He had said : “ We are a most reputable old family and the female members of it have done most to maintain its fair name. You are now a member of an equally respectable family which has many members, composed of sons of two mothers and a number of elderly women. Remember one thing above everything else. Never carry any tales about them to your husband. Never complain and suffer quietly if that be your lot. Ultimately



it will do you good." Ramabai never faltered in conforming to this injunction and eventually earned the blessings of all.

While in Bombay Ranade was associated with progressive movements in the social and religious fields and as such with the Prarthana Samaj. When he came to Poona he joined the Poona Prarthana Samaj which was founded there in 1870 by the late Mr. Vaman Abaji Modak. The Prarthana Samaj sought to discourage idol worship, obliterate caste differences and encourage widow remarriage among caste Hindus. There was a similar movement in the Punjab called the Arya Samaj. Its founder was Swami Dayananda Saraswati. He went to Poona in 1875 and delivered a course of 15 lectures. Poona was a centre of orthodoxy and could not tolerate these protestant tendencies of the Prarthana Samaj and the Arya Samaj. Although there were some differences between the Arya Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj, Ranade and his friends recognised that the Arya Samaj was a progressive force and they gave Swami Dayananda a warm welcome, attended his lectures and expected that because he was a *sanyasi*, even the orthodox Hindus of Poona would join them in doing honour to the Swami. *Sanyasis* are held in great reverence and when they say something it is more readily accepted by the masses than when said by ordinary men. His lectures were much appreciated but there was a section of mischief-mongers who revelled in ridiculing all reform. They got busy and made plans to insult the Swami.

Ranade and his friends had arranged to accord the Swami a somewhat festive farewell. It was proposed to take him in a procession through important streets of the city to the accompaniment of musical bands. He was seated on an elephant and there were torchlights. When the section opposed to all this learnt about these plans, they decided to organise a counter-demonstration. They went to the ridiculous length of getting hold of a donkey, dressing him like the Swami with orange robes and a turban and flower garlands and marching him in procession. They called him Gardabhananda and cheered him as they marched along with him. This extraordinary behaviour on the part of their opponents frightened Ranade's friends and lest something untoward should turn up, they proposed abandonment of the procession. But Ranade was firm. He said they must not behave like chicken-hearted fellows. They must stand by their original plans and find out how many people were really loyal to the flag of social reform.

Courage and steady pursuit were necessary for any cause to succeed. He also pointed out that every great movement had to go through the stages of neglect, ridicule and persecution. Success attended only those who were brave, resolute and persistent.

So it was decided to stick to the plan of taking out the procession of the Swami as previously decided. The meeting was held and while farewell speeches were in progress, a well-decorated elephant and a palanquin with the books of Vedas in it were kept at the porch of the lecture hall. The Swami came down the stairs and was seated on the elephant. Just at this movement, those who had organised the procession of the donkey came to the hall, began to jeer and shout at the Swami and Ranade and his friends like Kunte, Agashe and Mhaske. They did not pay attention to all this disturbance and the procession went along, the participants remaining patient and unprovoked. It had rained that day rather heavily and the streets had become muddy. The opponents picked up that mud and threw handfuls of it at Ranade and others and uttered foul words. Yet, they were silent and put up with all these indignities. The procession was accompanied by a police party, but it had clear instructions that unless its help was sought by the organisers, its members should be only witnesses of what was happening. A few minutes later sticks and brickbats were thrown by some mischievous people and some people not connected with the procession were hurt. The police then spotted the attackers and turned them out. The procession then reached its destination. The injured people were sent for treatment. A policeman was also hurt.

When Ranade reached home, it was noticed that his clothes were besmirched. He was asked how it happened when the police party was with him and his friends. He quietly said : “ When I was one of the many of my party, how could I be spared? The opponents do not distinguish between one man or other of the opposite party and we must not mind that.” When the police intervened they naturally caught hold of the ring-leaders and properly proceeded with them. Ranade came to know on inquiry who were the instigators of the riot and they also could easily have been brought to book. But they surrendered themselves and apologised when they found they were helpless. Ranade’s friends advised action against them but he did not share their view. He was in favour of forgiving them and allowing them to reform their ways of behaviour. This



incident happened on September 9, 1875.

In 1876, Vishnushastri Pandit breathed his last at the early age of 50. He was not only an advocate of widow remarriage and education for women, but had himself married a widow. Ranade was greatly touched by his death. He was a brilliant writer in Marathi and had conducted the *Induprakash* with great ability. He was a capable *Kirtankar* and had utilised his art to popularise Ranade's ideas on Swadeshi. Ranade, Kunte and others convened a condolence meeting in Poona at which both of them spoke. Ranade spoke on his career at the Deccan College the next day and also went to Bombay to participate in a public meeting held in Bombay to condole his death. Ranade actively participated in a movement to erect a Town Hall at Poona about this time and gave his one month's salary as a donation towards that purpose.

But the most important of his activities as a servant of the public was connected with the Sarvajanik Sabha. Only a year before Ranade came to Poona this body had come into being as part of the endeavour to put on a sound basis the management of the Parvati temple which was the hereditary religious property of the Peshwas. The Pratinidhi of Aundh was its chairman and among its members were K. P. Gadgil, K. G. Nattu and K. B. Marathe. The organisers thought that it should continue to function by attending to all public questions as they arose. Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi, better known as Sarvajanik Kaka or Uncle of the People was its chief moving spirit. He heartily welcomed Ranade in Poona and their collaboration proved very fruitful for the public life of Maharashtra in general and Poona in particular. Even before Ranade's advent to Poona, there were some spasmodic attempts to build up a semblance of public life. For instance, the Deccan Sardars had started in Poona a body called the Deccan Association in order to represent their demands before Parliament when (1853) the question of extending the charter of the East India Company was under consideration. In 1854, Morshastri Sathe had started a body known as Kalyanonnayak Sabha but it soon decayed and died. In 1867, there was started the Poona Association on the lines of the Bombay Association in Bombay and this was eventually merged in the Sarvajanik Sabha.

The Sabha started without any funds in the beginning, but steps were soon taken to raise funds for the purpose of carrying on the Sabha's work by means of subscriptions, donations, etc. and as

years rolled on and the Sabha made its existence felt by its vigorous advocacy of the people's cause, subscriptions and donations flowed in from the rich and the poor alike. The preamble of the constitution of the Sabha lays down : " Whereas it has been deemed expedient that there should exist between the Government and the people, some institution in the shape of a mediating body which may afford to the latter facilities for knowing the real intentions and objects of Government as also adequate means of securing their rights by making timely representations to Government of the real circumstances in which they were placed, an association has been formed and organised under the appellation of Poona Sarvajanik Sabha ". The real difference between this organisation and other organisations like the Bombay Association was that the Sarvajanik Sabha went to the people and built up public opinion by educating the people. It did not merely send representations and memoranda. Ranade was instrumental in promoting this policy consciously by holding meetings in support of the representations sent.

Ranade made his presence conspicuously felt in Poona by delivering a number of lectures on a variety of topics. In December 1872, he gave a learned discourse on the condition of India's trade and explained what was called the drain of wealth from India to England. He pointed out that no less than one-third of the total revenue gathered from taxation went straight to England by way of what were called Home Charges. He said that raw materials were exported in large quantities and only a small part of those materials came back to India in the form of finished products. People were more and more inclined towards fancy, imported goods and indigenous products not having their finish and polish because they were mostly hand-made, were being gradually banished from daily consumption by the people. Trade and administration were in the hands of a foreign government and they could do little to improve their trade for lack of political power. They could meet the menace of finished foreign goods by starting factories run by machinery in their own country, but that meant large capital which could be raised only from the savings of the people. He calculated that from 1861 to 1870, gold and silver valued at 150 crores of rupees came to India. Half of it was used for coinage, but half of it was consumed by the people by converting it into ornaments and burying it under the earth. All the savings must be harnessed to start industries in order to achieve our industrial uplift and as



a consequence of it, a higher standard of life. This is what Ranade said in effect. What has been said here is a brief summary of a lecture which he delivered for about two hours. Lastly he cited the example of France. She was required to pay reparations to the tune of 500 crores of rupees, as a consequence of the Franco-German War of 1870, but she did not lose heart, carried out retrenchment and economy measures with courage and vigour and outlived the crisis. Indians who ungrudgingly submitted to taxation should tax themselves voluntarily, amass savings and on the strength of capital so collected start manufacturing industries — that was the burden of his speech.

A few weeks later, in February 1872, Ranade made another speech on the subject in which he again exhorted private citizens to act in a patriotic spirit in order to develop indigenous trade and industry. He said under British rule Indian trade certainly increased. New crops like tea, coffee and indigo flourished. Some Indians got work. The railways helped trade to prosper and India exported her foodgrains, oil seeds, jute and wool. But this sort of increase in trade only further impoverished the country, paradoxical as it might appear. But it was easily explicable. The trade grew on the strength of British capital and the profit went into British pockets, Indian labourers getting only a pittance on which they kept body and soul together. Ranade then pointed out that India was fortunately blessed with a variety of climate and land, she grew a variety of trees and herbs, foodgrains and fruits. India had the capacity to provide one or other commodity required by some country which she had in plenty and this process kept her on her feet for decades. The result was that more and more people were falling back on agriculture and while trade grew, indigenous industries decayed and died. That process had to stop and it could be arrested only by Indians taking to industries instead of depending on manufactured articles from foreign countries.

These two speeches proved inspiring and instructive. The idea of *Swadeshi*, of preferring goods of our own country even if they were a little more costly and less finished and polished, was popularised by him. A number of enthusiastic persons were so moved by his speeches that they took vows to wear and use only *Swadeshi* goods. Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi, Ranade's first prominent colleague and helpmate in Poona, was the most conspicuous among them. It was in 1871, soon after Ranade was in

Poona that Joshi and he had many talks in this behalf and a co-operative company was started to deal in *Swadeshi* goods. Their co-operation was ever on the increase till Joshi alias 'The Uncle of the People' was alive. In the work of the Sarvajanik Sabha, he was the executive and Ranade was the brain behind every activity. Joshi was born in 1828. He did not know English well but picked up a working knowledge of it in the later years of his life. At the age of 20 he took up a clerical job, but gave it up after seven or eight years. Some defalcation was alleged against him and he was suspended from service. It was proved to be false and he was informed that he could resume duty, but he had made up his mind to resign. He had already studied law before he received this order and started practice as a lawyer. He became a prosperous lawyer before long. He devoted his leisure entirely to public work. He is particularly remembered in Maharashtra for having attended Queen Victoria's Durbar in 1877 in his *Khaddar* apparel.

England's Prime Minister Gladstone appointed a Parliamentary Committee in 1871 to inquire into the condition of Indian finance. It was known as the Fawcett Committee, by the name of its chairman Professor Fawcett whose book on political economy was for long considered a classic but whose tenets Ranade himself subjected to severe criticism as wholly untenable in Indian conditions. The Sarvajanik Sabha, curiously enough, had backed his candidature in the general election that followed Parliament's dissolution in 1874. The Government of India sent some representatives as its witnesses before this Committee and the Bombay Association sent Naoroji Fardunji. Ranade was considered as the Sarvajanik Sabha's witness, but it was thought likely that government would nominate him as its representative. The proposal did not materialise and Naoroji Fardunji was at last authorised to represent the Sarvajanik Sabha also. Although Ranade was unable to go as witness before this Committee, his interest in the subject never flagged. He went on making summaries of the proceedings of the Committee's work in his articles. The Sarvajanik Sabha had resolved in December 1872 to investigate into the material conditions of Maharashtra districts with a view to preparing a report that might be supplementary and perhaps a corrective to that of the Parliamentary Committee. The report was published in the form of a booklet in 1873. The Parliamentary Committee's work went



on in England from 1871 to 1874 and had Gladstone's government been retained in power, hope was entertained that Indian finance would be placed on a sounder footing. But the Committee's work came to an end with the fall of the Gladstone government and Disraeli succeeding him as Prime Minister. Ranade, however, went through the stupendous task of making a summary of the 3500 pages of the Fawcett Committee's report comprising four volumes. This epitome was published in 1877 under the title, *A Revenue Manual of the British Empire in India*.

The political status of India was also engaging Ranade's attention and the seeds of what later came to be called responsible government, self-government and self-determination could be easily traced to the representation that the Sarvajanik Sabha submitted to the British Parliament. Its conception and draftsmanship, it hardly need be said, were Ranade's. The representation demanded that India's representatives should be allowed to sit in the British Parliament in London and Indian questions should be settled with their knowledge and consent. Eighteen representatives from the various provinces of India should be elected by voters who paid Rs. 50 a year by way of taxation. In order to place on record that this representation had the backing of a large body of public opinion, thousands of signatures were collected in support of it from all parts of India. Now, Ranade was not so simple as to imagine that as soon as such a representation was placed on Parliament's table, the demand made would be conceded. His idea obviously was to awaken political consciousness among the people and to teach them to think on right, constitutional lines, in order eventually to acquire a legitimate political status for India within the British Empire. That is why he took the trouble of collecting so many signatures. He was anxious to interest as many people as possible in a demand which was perfectly legitimate. It was only the beginning of the political education of his fellowmen. Yet, even Chiploonkar's *Nibandhamala* indulged in childish and ridiculous language against this move in those days. But the government of the day was not slow to realise that this was the beginning of political awakening in Maharashtra.

Many an event that took place during Ranade's seven years in Poona was pregnant with great consequences. In 1875, a number of dacoities and robberies took place in the Deccan districts of Poona, Satara, Sholapur and Ahmednagar. They came to be

designated in official papers as the Deccan Riots. There was terrific unrest and terror in the atmosphere, but there was not much violence and crime in evidence. For instance, there were no murders or beatings at all. The rioters aimed their activities against the village moneylenders whose extortionate methods and exploitation of the ryots had made them thoroughly unpopular. Most raids of the rioters were intended to destroy the records of the *sowkars* in order to remove evidence of debts due to them and to take revenge on them for their heartless practices in recovering their dues. Since only the *sowkars* and their houses were singled out for attack, the impression was created that the riots were only anti-*sowkar*. It suited the government to lend its support to this impression being confirmed. But the real reason was that the peasantry was rack-rented, the assessment imposed being too high. That led to general poverty and discontent and the attacks on the *sowkars* were only an ostensible symptom of it. That was the view of the Sarvajanic Sabha and it was cogently put forward in the representation that was sent to the government after the riots were quelled. It was pointed out that these riots took place only in those districts where the land assessment was excessively increased while the *sowkars* plied their business in all districts and not only in those where the riots broke out. Therefore, the primary cause of the riots was government policy and the secondary cause was the cruelty of the *sowkars*. The commission which inquired into the cause of the riots upheld the reasoning of the Sarvajanic Sabha but the government did not lower assessments even after that.

Ranade had counselled patience and this representation was despatched only after peace was completely restored. The Sabha was getting gradually unpopular with the government on account of its bold petitions and representations and the active work it was doing among the people to educate them in their rights and responsibilities. Ranade feared some precipitous action might jeopardise the Sabha's existence itself. The immediate cause for such fear being entertained was the Sabha's running to the defence of the Maharaja of Baroda, Mulharrao Gaekwad, who was at last deposed on charges of misrule and attempting to poison the British Resident at Baroda even though the second charge was not held valid against the Maharaja by an inquiry commission.

This Mulharrao Gaekwad affair is rather an important affair



in that not only the Sarvajanic Sabha and therefore Ranade but also Dadabhai Naoroji, the grand old man of India, played an important role in it as India's patriotic spokesmen. The story, therefore, has to be told in some detail. The full account might be seen in the biography of Dadabhai Naoroji by Sir R. P. Masani. Mulharrao Gaekwad was in no sense a prince deserving the cordial affection of any one but Dadabhai and Ranade went to his rescue because he represented the Baroda State and the Indian princely order and any onslaught by the British on the Indian States roused feelings of resistance in the patriotic hearts of these two great men. Mulharrao was kept in prison by his elder brother, Khanderao, while he was on the throne but when Khanderao died suddenly, the British power recognised Mulharrao as his successor because Khanderao had no male heir. Mulharrao inherited a miserable legacy. "Misgovernment had then reached its climax in Baroda. A coterie of intriguers and blood-suckers had seized the reins of office. Under their misrule, the impoverished and oppressed people had been clamouring for years for freedom."

Mulharrao was scarcely the person who could put right this state of affairs. Indeed he was quite fit for worsening it. The besetting sin of this man was his weakness for women and so parents of pretty girls, panderers and harpies easily ingratiated themselves into the favour of the Maharaja and were soon placed in lucrative positions. State revenues were farmed out to the best bidders who in turn enhanced fourfold the exactions from the public. People abandoned their homes to escape oppression. There were large deficits which were made good by robbing the hereditary sardars of their dues. The administration of justice was a mockery; whoever offered the highest sum received a verdict in his favour. Intoxicated by unfettered powers and unrestrained pleasure placed within his reach, Mulharrao scarcely realised that he was riding for a fall. The British Residency could have pulled him up, but it allowed matters to drift from bad to worse. It was non-intervention run to dangerous lengths. The paramount power did not object to the selection of the Maharaja's advisers and executive officers who were more often than not worthless people and the *zulum* they practised went unchecked under the very nose of the British Resident, Colonel Phayre, who actually encouraged misrule was almost inimical to Dadabhai when the latter accepted the Dewanship of Baroda.



How Dadabhai came on the scene is worth a little close study. He came to India from England to enlist moral and monetary support to the East India Association of London. As he approached other Princes and potentates for support, he also approached His Highness of Baroda. He was received well and presented with 'a court dress' but he returned empty-handed to Bombay. While he was in Indore a telegram came from Baroda, stating that the Maharaja wished to see him. On reaching Baroda, Dadabhai met the Prince and his courtiers. Mulharrao's problem was : To attend the Viceroy's *darbar* in Bombay in November 1872 or not? To decline the invitation would be tantamount to insult to the Viceroy and acceptance meant being prepared for an insult from the Governor of Bombay and the Viceroy. Here a reference to a little earlier history is necessary. According to a term in the treaty between Baroda and the British, there was a peculiar custom of seating the British Governor in the Baroda *darbar* which the then Governor, Seymour Fitzgerald, wanted to be altered. The Viceroy supported him in his demand, but Mulharrao would not agree. It may be, he feared, that if he attended the Viceroy's *darbar*, he might not be offered a seat befitting his dignity. Dadabhai sympathised with Mulharrao, because although the matter was petty, the depraved Prince appeared to be thinking in terms of self-respect and dignity. Dadabhai hit upon a device which enabled the Prince to decline the Viceregal invitation. Rani Mhalsabai had prematurely given birth to a daughter which did not live more than a week and the Rani was in a precarious condition. The Maharaja could not leave Baroda in that situation. That was enough to make the Prince think quite highly of Dadabhai Naoroji. A suitable letter was drafted by him and the matter appeared to have ended for the time being. But misgovernment continued and the Paramount Power at last felt compelled to appoint a commission to investigate various charges of misconduct and misrule brought against Mulharrao and he became uneasy. For the first time he realised the urgency of putting his house in order. In despair he looked around and his eyes fell on Dadabhai. Sir Philip Wodehouse had come out as the Governor of Bombay and he sent Colonel Phayre as Resident with instructions to give advice to the Prince and see that the reign of terror was ended. Ever since 1802, the Gaekwad of Baroda had informal assurances that the British Government would not interfere in the internal administration of the territories of which



it acknowledged him to be the ruler, but he was expected to listen to advice in a case of gross misrule. The contents of the letters that Col. Phayre wrote might be gathered from a despatch of the Government of Bombay to the Government of India. The following are the opening words of it :

“The appended letter of the Resident has brought to notice various cases which, if substantiated, will establish that gross oppression is committed, that Ministers and their officers systematically receive bribes in connection with the sale of office and that large numbers of women are decoyed or forcibly taken from their families and converted into *loundies* i.e. domestic female slaves. The history of the past is a mere record of evasion, duplicity, oppression and corruption followed by humiliating submission intended to ward off the evil of the moment and to give time to the resumption of the old practices.”

The Government of Bombay secured the necessary authority of the Government of India to instruct the Resident to demand from the Gaekwad immediate suspension of his Dewan and some other officials and also to appoint a Commission to inquire into the system of revenue administration and allegations of misgovernment and misdemeanour. The authority was granted. Mulharrao was now a bundle of nerves and wanted some strong arm to save him. He remembered Dadabhai. An invitation was sent to him. He hesitated and consulted his friends because the Resident at Baroda was opposed to Dadabhai's selection and comments in newspapers like the *Induprakash*, the *Times of India* and the *Bombay Gazette* had appeared in which the attitude of the Resident was unequivocally condemned because it was considered very welcome on the part of Mulharrao that he was inclined to take advice from a man so politically enlightened and so high-principled as Dadabhai was known to be. Dadabhai's Indian friends like Kharsedji Cama and Sorabji Bengalee and British friends like Sir Bartle Frere and Sir Erskine Perry advised him to accept the offer. Sir Erskine wrote to him : “I am very sorry to hear that objections have been made to your going to Baroda as Dewan. Though for your own sake I would have counselled you against accepting such an appointment, I think for the sake of good government and for British interests as well as for the Gaekwar's, he could not have made



a better selection.”

That settled it. Dadabhai knew how mercurial and even deceitful Maharajas could be but the supreme consideration was that of service in the cause of good government. As long as he could keep the confidence and support of the Maharaja he would do his best for Baroda and its people. When that was no longer the case he would not care to stay for a moment in Baroda. In this spirit Dadabhai reasoned and accepted the Dewanship and by the end of 1873, he found himself buried in files of State papers and *daftars* as the Dewan-designate. He invited men like Mandlik, Ranade and Nana Moroji to join him. None of these went, but still his team was quite good because he had Bal Mangesh Wagle for his Chief Justice, Kazi Shahbuddin as Revenue Chief and Hormusji Wadya as Chief Magistrate and Police Chief. Many months passed before he was formally installed as Prime Minister. There was some correspondence between the Resident and the Government of Bombay which in turn wrote to the Government of India. Col. Phayre failed to see how an idealist like Dadabhai could consent to serve a master of Mulharrao's character. He set it down only to love of power and position and so was never reconciled to his appointment. Seven months passed like this, the Resident remaining unceasingly hostile and the Maharaja and his Durbaris not helping Dadabhai at all by improving upon their previous ways. Only once Dadabhai had succeeded in getting the Maharaja to write to the Viceroy that he was turning a new leaf. But there were a number of incidents to cause him anxiety and depress his spirit. Only faith in the righteousness of his cause sustained Dadabhai and he demanded authority to deal sternly with all abuses. The Maharaja regarded it as an ultimatum and his Durbaris construed it as an attempt 'to swallow the Riyasat'.

There were several friendly discussions between the Maharaja and Dadabhai but while the arrangements proposed by Dadhabai were still under discussion, on August 3, 1873 came a despatch from the Viceroy. Overruling the Government of Bombay, the Governor-General-in-Council preferred to hold the Gaekwad himself responsible for the good government of his State under a warning that if he did not reform his administration by the end of December 1875, he would be deposed from power. The choice of the Dewan was left to His Highness. The Resident and the Durbaris were opposed to Dadabhai being confirmed. He was



still Dewan-designate. Within a week, their intrigues reached alarming proportions. The Maharaja's own attitude, because he now felt secure for about seventeen months, had become unfriendly. So Dadabhai and his colleagues tendered their resignations on August 9. This frightened the Maharaja. He entreated Dadabhai and his colleagues to stay on. So they withdrew their resignations. Resident Phayre's indignation become uncontrollable and he sent word to the Maharaja to dispense with Dadabhai's services. But now Mulharrao's vacillation had disappeared. Forthwith he issued a note that military honours be accorded to Dadabhai as Dewan. He was invested with the insignia of office with all due ceremonies amidst the rejoicings of the general public on September 23, 1874. The Resident was strongly pulled up by the Government of Bombay for his machinations against Dadabhai and it seemed as if everything would proceed well thereafter.

But the Resident would not take his censure lying down. He excelled in burrowing like a mole and he utilised with dexterity various subterranean sources to discredit Dadabhai. In contrast to the malicious and abusive representations made by the Colonel, Dadabhai put down the following words, in a plain, dignified and magnanimous tone, in a despatch he sent to the Government of Bombay against the Resident. He said : " I beg it to be understood that I do not impute other than conscientious motives to Colonel Phayre. But he is too committed to a distinct line. He makes no allowances. He forgets that till the officials I have asked for came, I could not make much progress in the Mahals and he continues to lend a ready ear to complaints against me, thus defeating the very object which he says he has in view of helping me in the arduous task before me. Colonel Phayre has been my prosecutor with a determined and strong will and purpose and that now he should sit in judgment upon me is, I must submit, simply unfair to me. From only three months' experience it is clear that he has prejudiced the case and I cannot expect an impartial report from him.... I owe it to myself and to those whom I have engaged for work to submit how hopeless any efforts on my part would be if, Colonel Phayre were to continue here as representative of the Paramount Power with his uncompromising bias against me and my officials."

The whole correspondence in this behalf satisfied the Government



of India and the Secretary of State, Lord Salisbury, that Col. Phayre had "thoroughly misunderstood" the spirit of the instructions of both the Governments of Bombay and India and so the duties of the Resident at Baroda could no longer be entrusted to him. Even the Government of Bombay came in for some censure and as a temporary measure, Sir Lewis Pelly was deputed as Agent to the Governor-General and Special Commissioner at Baroda. The political jurisdiction of the Government of Bombay over Baroda was suspended. Mulharrao naturally considered this as a great triumph for him. It was relief to Dadabhai also whose triumph it really was, but he could not share the jubilation in which the Maharaja indulged. Rather, he became pensive. The Maharaja began to behave as if Dadabhai was no longer indispensable. With the arrival of Sir Lewis Pelly, it had appeared that thereafter it would be smooth sailing but there were the courtiers to keep Mulharrao's ears poisoned. At last Dadabhai got disappointed and decided to resign and asked the Maharaja to relieve him as soon as possible. He called on Sir Lewis and told him of his intention. He asked Dadabhai to continue for some time until a successor was appointed. The Maharaja, however, appeared disinclined to choose any one as Dewan and Dadabhai said he would like to be relieved as soon as possible. The Maharaja would not also listen to his privy purse being touched in order to pay off some urgent dues of claimants.

As if all this was not enough a serious allegation was laid at the door of the Maharaja. The allegation was that an attempt had been made to poison Colonel Phayre. Every morning, after a walk or a ride, the Colonel used to drink a glass of *Sherbat* made of *pummelo* juice. He would then go to his office. On November 9, the Colonel threw away the *Sherbat* after a sip or two as he did not like the taste. Within a short time, he experienced nausea, a dizzy feeling in the head and other strange symptoms. He suspected mischief. On examining the goblet of *Sherbat* he noticed a sort of sediment in the small quantity still left in it. The Residency surgeon found that the sediment partly consisted of arsenic and partly of some glittering substance like diamond dust. The Maharaja was suspected of having made an attempt on his life. The Colonel quietly reported the matter to Government. Dadabhai accepted the word of Mulharrao that he had no hand in the matter and so long as he was Dewan it was his duty to see that no harm was



done to him. He had a conference with Sir Lewis Pelly about this time when Sir Lewis asked him if he still insisted on his resignation or he had changed his mind. Dadabhai told him that he and his colleagues had finally decided to leave the Maharaja's service. Only after hearing this, Sir Lewis disclosed to him that the Maharaja was suspected of complicity in the attempt to poison Colonel Phayre. The Maharaja was informed about this but he protested that he had nothing to do with it.

On January 11, 1875, Dadabhai and his assistants left Baroda. The Maharaja went to the station to see them off. As Dadabhai was an impediment in his way of uncontrolled behaviour, he was rather gleeful that he had got rid of him and said so to his flatterers. But his joy was short-lived. On the very day Dadabhai left there was a big movement of troops from Poona to Bombay and when Dadabhai reached Bombay he saw that a regiment had been despatched to Baroda. Another followed the day after. This frightened the Maharaja and he at once telegraphed to Dadabhai to return to Baroda, though he was no longer his Dewan. Before Dadabhai could reach Baroda, the Maharaja was placed under arrest. A Commission was soon appointed to inquire into the allegations. It finished its inquiry. Complicity in the attempt to poison Colonel Phayre could not be fastened on the Maharaja. Yet the British Government decided that he should be deposed on counts other than those which formed part of the indictment viz. notorious misconduct and gross misgovernment. There were rumours of annexation of the State also. At last, however, the orders of the Secretary of State were received, sanctioning the deposition and deportation of Mulharrao and allowing the widow of Khanderao to adopt as her son a member of the Gaekwad family to succeed Mulharrao. This adopted young boy later brightened the name of Baroda as Sir Sayajirao and richly deserved the title of 'the Modern Bhoj' that the people lovingly bestowed upon him.

The Sarvajanic Sabha entered on the scene in this Mulharrao episode when it was seen that the Maharaja had been deposed and that he was unable even to defend himself. Sarvajanic Kaka at once sent a telegram that a lakh of rupees would be collected for the Maharaja's defence, though this was not allowed by the Government and a defence counsel was provided for him. On January 15, 1875, a public meeting was held at Poona, attended by about 3,000 people. Ranade drafted a memorial for submission to the



Viceroy which the public meeting approved. While Colonel Phayre and the Maharaja were at daggers drawn, the Resident had had a report spread that Mulharrao was sending his emissaries to the Deccan for support. Ranade wanted to counteract this false report and therefore he took care to explain in this memorial in what way Poona was interested in Baroda. "Your Memorialists, as the inhabitants of the late capital of the Peshwas, are bound by diverse ties of interests and relationship with the outlying conquests of the once great Mahratta confederacy, represented by the States of Baroda, Indore, Gwalior, etc. They feel legitimate interest in the progress and well-being of these states which maintain in their various services and by means of their charities a considerable number of their fellow countrymen who have settled in those parts of these states. The Gaekwad kingdom as being the oldest, richest and nearest, has always been regarded as having the greatest claim upon the affections of the people."

In the course of this memorial Ranade pointed out that the Indian states were props and supports of the British power and therefore it was in the interest of the rulers that the states should be maintained in a sound state and their rulers turned into enlightened and progressive administrators. He said : "Your Excellency's Government are aware of the manners of the princes of royal blood in all countries. Power and wealth are necessarily attended with fickleness and such other weaknesses. But in the case of the native princes particularly, such political circumstances have existed as make them weak-minded men of narrow views, who have much means of luxury and whose sirdars and subjects cannot exercise legitimate check because of the overawing presence of British Residents." Referring to the particular case of Baroda, he roundly charged the Resident for having encouraged unrestrained behaviour on the part of the Maharaja. He further observed : "It is consonant with justice that the integrity of a native state in alliance with the British Government is not bound up with the personal good behaviour of the ruler of the state for the time being. The state survives a succession of rulers that live and die. So long as the subjects of a native state are not guilty of hostility towards the British Government, it will not be just to punish them for the errors or vices of their chiefs for the time being. The state (Dowlat) does not belong of private right to the Chief. He and the Rajmandal (the men whose ancestors fought and bled with



the ancestors of the Chief and independent civil and military population) are alike interested in it." There is obviously a protest here against the rumoured annexation of the state. This memorial must have influenced, at least to a certain extent, the decision against annexation. The Sabha also protested against the deposition of Mulharrao when the charge of poisoning Colonel Phayre was not proved against him. It proved futile and the net result was that Government began to think that the Sarvajanik Sabha was becoming a troublesome body and a nuisance. It had begun to cause annoyance and embarrassment on occasions.

That Government had become suspicious about the Sarvajanik Sabha and its activities and wanted to discover if there was something more than what appeared on the surface is clear from the measures Government had taken at that time. Ramabai Ranade has narrated an amusing affair in which a Bengali detective was involved and was exposed. When he came to Poona, he tried to make himself popular by freely entertaining people at his residence. It became a club for the Poona *elite*. Sitaram Hari Chiploonkar, one of the Secretaries of the Sarvajanik Sabha, was one of the people who was attracted to this place of gaiety and amusement. The Bengali man would not disclose his name to anybody or speak of his whereabouts out of affected modesty. Ranade suspected that he was a spy. He asked Chiploonkar to watch his mail. That was done and it appeared that no postman delivered his mail. He used to go to the General Post Office and take delivery personally. Similarly, he would personally post his letters and most of his correspondence was with a Secretary of the Government of India. Every one became suspicious of him and the number of people who visited his house began to diminish. The Bengali man suspected trouble and quietly disappeared one day, bag and baggage. He left no trace behind.

In 1876, as a result of the failure of the monsoons, conditions of acute scarcity and famine prevailed in all districts of the Deccan. Thousands of peasants found themselves in the grip of starvation and death. Ranade was greatly moved by this state of affairs and decided to take active steps to combat this danger. Through the Sarvajanik Sabha, he sent agents to collect information from as many centres as possible. They established close touch with Kulkarnis, postmasters, school teachers and such other persons in the village from whom they could intelligently



collect facts. Their reports were examined by the Secretary of the Sabha. Ranade was entrusted with the work of co-ordinating all this work. He wrote notes on the basis of this information and they were forwarded to Government in the form of representations by the Sabha. These notes, besides giving information about famine conditions, reviewed Government's relief activity. They were critical, constructive, commendatory and fully justifiable. Many officials liked this service by the Sabha immensely and the Sabha was highly spoken of. Yet the suspicion did not wholly die out, because when a number of people went on strike and refused to work on famine relief works because the ration they received and the remuneration they were paid were insufficient, it was suspected that the Sabha had instigated them to resort to such direct action. But Ranade's reasoned writings ultimately left no room for any such construction on its attitude.

In the midst of this famine was held a *Durbar* at Delhi in January 1877 and all the gaiety and festivity that was associated with it was incongruous with the distress in the country. While the Governor of Bombay, Sir Philip Wodehouse, was at Mahableshwar, the Collector of Sholapur, one Mr. Grant, called upon him and disclosed to him the tale of woe and distress in Sholapur district. Similar reports from other districts also reached him. The Governor naturally asked the counsel of the Governor-General. He was asked to start famine relief works and organise charity. Sir Richard Temple, who was later promoted to the Governorship of the Province, was sent out as Famine Commissioner. But by his methods of work and administration of even famine relief, he earned only unpopularity. It must be said to his credit that while working in a similar capacity in Bengal, when Lord Northbrook was Viceroy, he had earned the gratitude of the Bengalis by his generous policy of help and relief. But under Lord Lytton he fixed only half a seer of foodgrains as enough for an adult in this 1876-77 famine and became unpopular. The contrast between the 1877 *Durbar* festivity and the starvation in the Deccan was so glaring that it became intolerable to the people.

While the scarcity and famine conditions were causing misery and affliction to the people, a public meeting was held in Poona under the auspices of the Sarvajanic Sabha to approve an address to be presented to the Queen of England, who was going to add the new title 'Empress of India' to her other titles. It was Ranade's



idea that while the Queen should be greeted and people should pledge their loyalty to her, she should also be given to understand what the people's expectations from her were. He invited Telang and Wagle from Bombay for consultation and an address affirming loyalty and expressing wishes of good health, long life and prosperity, but also containing a list of popular complaints, grievances and aspirations, was prepared. Anglo-Indian newspapers considered this impertinent but Ranade's plea was that the British Queen must follow the traditional custom of Indian rulers and grant some striking boons on an occasion of rejoicing. His demand was that while assuming the title, Empress of India, responsible self-government would be an appropriate gift. This was in consonance with the representation that the Sabha had sent to Parliament in 1874. Indianisation of services was implicit in this and that too was in keeping with the declaration of Queen Victoria after the Mutiny of 1857. He also urged the employment of the Indian princes in positions of trust and responsibility and their association with imperial administration. He pointed out that the Muslim rulers, although tyrants, followed this policy and Indian princes were appointed as ministers, generals and diplomats by them. He demanded the formation of a Council of Representatives and a Chamber of Princes which would eventually become the House of Commons and the House of Lords in India. His idea was to bring together all the people of India in order that they should have a unity of aim, outlook and ideals. Besides including all this in the address to the Queen's Government, he persuaded Sarvajanic Kaka and Dr. Govande to send an open letter to the princes in which all these ideas were incorporated. Sarvajanic Kaka presented it at the Delhi *Durbar*, in his Khaddar dress and awkward turban. Kaka met many princes at Delhi and discussed the contents of the address with them.

Ranade envisaged, as it were, India's political future in this document. In order that its form and outline should become known to all, he delivered on April 24, 1877, a speech on India's political future in which he dealt in detail with the contents of the address to the Queen.

In 1877, the rains came and the stress of the famine began to lift. Government reports regarding the consequences of the famine began to be written. Government appointed a Famine Commission to devise the best and the most suitable remedies in the event of

another similar disaster. Ranade wrote a paper entitled *Famine Administration in the Bombay Presidency*. He appreciated certain principles and methods followed by Government in giving relief and remarked that this "had justified the confidence felt by the people in their rulers and greatly contributed to the acknowledged success of famine management". He cited facts and figures to expose some complacent official conclusions as to the percentage of population affected by the famine and as to the percentages of deaths resulting from it. He pointed out that though men and women had returned to their villages, there were to be seen many deserted houses and such desertion could only be explained by the death of their owners. After the Famine Commission's report was submitted, Government prepared the Famine Code and a number of suggestions made by Ranade in his paper were incorporated in them. Ranade's interest in the welfare of the agricultural population which was roused by this famine, was sustained ever after as a number of articles contributed to the *Sarvajanik Sabha Quarterly* during 1879 and 1891 amply show. There was a similar famine in 1896-1897 when Tilak fully copied Ranade's methods, took the benefit of the Famine Code and prepared the people to face the calamity of famine as much by self-help as with Government help.

During his seven years in Poona, Ranade had brought about a great transformation in Poona's public life. There was an awakening all round and young people who came after him began to think in terms of the future of their country and fellowmen. Public bodies calculated to serve the people were started. Government took an alarmist view of this awakening and finding out that Ranade was the fountain-head of this new inspiration, Sir Richard Temple's administration took recourse to the rule that no subordinate judge should continue to work at one and the same place for more than five years and transferred him to Nasik. Poona bid him farewell with a heavy heart when, in January 1878, he left the city he so dearly loved to take charge of his work at Nasik.



## VI

### CLOUD OF GOVERNMENT SUSPICION

RANADE'S TRANSFER to Nasik was to all intents and purposes, a mild punishment or disciplinary action taken against him, with a view to correcting him. His supposed guilt was his deep, keen, active interest in movements calculated to better the lot of his country. He took quite often, the initiative in such movements and if there was no positive disapproval of such activity on the part of the Government, it was not much liked either. He had a firm faith in the righteousness and propriety of what he was doing and he believed that unfounded suspicion could not do him much harm and so even from Nasik he continued his association with the activities in Poona and initiated some new ones at Nasik.

Ranade went to Nasik in January 1878, but he had to attend to some domestic affairs and so taking casual leave he returned to Poona early in February. As soon he was in Poona he had a serious attack of pneumonia. The attack was so serious that most of his friends and relatives almost despaired of his surviving the illness. Hundreds of people paid visits to his house to make personal inquiries and the whole city appeared to be affected by what was regarded as a probable disaster — such was the measure of the confidence he had created among the people by dint of his sheer selfless work for their good. Many organised public prayers and penances in temples for his recovery while Dr. Vishram Ramji Ghole employed all his medical acumen to save him.

Ranade was, undoubtedly, passing through a crisis but he had somehow or other the confidence that he was not going to succumb. His mind was calm and balanced and he left his body to wrestle with the disease with such aid as medical science could give it. The only spiritual solace that he sought was by having the *Vishnusahasranama* repeated to him without cessation by a pious Brahmin. This psalm is part of the *Mahabharata*. The

great Bhishma kept repeating it while lying on his bed of arrows, waiting for death to come at the precise moment he wanted it to come. The thousand epithets and attributes of God enumerated in the psalm provide a contemplative mind scope to meditate about God's all-pervasive character. Ranade's idea was to concentrate his mind only on that, while his life was trembling in the balance.

People considered it as their great good fortune that Ranade was saved. He was then only 36 years old but within that period he had done so much that he held out a promise of far greater achievement. There was great rejoicing at his recovery and an endless stream of personal and institutional letters of congratulation flowed to him from far and near for some time. This proof of popular confidence must have been a great solace and even an encouragement to him while the clouds of Government suspicion kept hovering over his head for some time. When he was quite well and in a position to resume duty he went back to Nasik by the middle of March 1878, accompanied by his wife and his two brothers and while attending as diligently and as conscientiously as before to his official duties, he did not withdraw from his public activities in any way.

While at Nasik Ranade interested himself in various projects of social, political and religious importance and luckily enough he had in Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh a kindred spirit for an ally and a helpmate. He founded there a public library and made plans for starting a branch of the Prarthana Samaj. He organised from Nasik a plan for the encouragement of publication of books in Marathi on such subjects as history, science, social reform, biography, etc. It was proposed to hold, during the May vacation, a gathering of authors and also to establish a society to encourage the growth of literature. Work was to begin after securing 500 permanent subscribers to purchase the books that the society would publish. A committee of Raojishastri Godbole, Krishnashastri Chiploonkar and Shrikrishnashastri Talekar was formed to scrutinise the manuscripts that would be submitted to the society. Accordingly a gathering of authors was held on May 11, but this movement does not appear to have made much progress, though the society did come into existence and did some useful work for a few years.

A conference of journalists working in the field of Indian language newspapers was also held at Calcutta at the instance of the



Sarvajanik Sabha whose executive was Joshi (Sarvajanik Kaka) and brain was Ranade. The immediate provocation for the mobilisation of newspapermen was the Vernacular Press Act of 1877, passed by Lord Lytton in order to control writing in the Indian language press. It was in order to circumvent this Act that the Ghose brothers who were running the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* originally in Bengali turned it into an English newspaper overnight and discomfited Lord Lytton. After this conference Sarvajanik Kaka came to Bombay and convened a conference of Bombay journalists to protest against the Vernacular Press Act. It was held under the presidentship of Janardan Sunderji Kirtikar, then editor of the Marathi side of the *Induprakash*. Ranade, of course, supported all these activities. It was about this time that Tilak and Agarkar were making plans to found the New English School, the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta* at Poona in co-operation with Vishnushastri Chiploonkar and took Ranade's counsel also in the matter. In a letter addressed to Tilak and Agarkar, Ranade said that a national press, national education and a national church were potent means for the national uplift. Ranade welcomed their independent and intrepid spirit and wished them all good luck.

By the end of 1878, Ranade returned to Poona for the summer vacation. Early in May, a public meeting was held under the auspices of the Sarvajanik Sabha to protest against the Vernacular Press Act. It was attended by several officials and influential non-officials, including Sardars and Inamdars. It is needless to say that Ranade was present and helped in drafting the resolutions of the meeting. A memorial was also prepared for submission to the Viceroy in pursuance of the resolutions adopted. It was pointed out in the memorial that the Government had altogether misunderstood the writings in the journals in the Indian languages which sympathised with Turkey in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877. The usual plea of suppressing activities tending to promote hatred between different classes of Her Majesty's subjects was trotted out by the Government in support of the legislation. Ranade exposed the hollowness of the argument. Yet the *Induprakash* was administered a warning by the Bombay Police Commissioner and the *Kiran* of Poona edited by M. B. Namjoshi, who later joined the Tilak-Agarkar-Chiploonkar group, was suppressed by the Government. Ranade cogently explained in the representation that action against a number of newspapers that was taken under



the Act was unjustified and undeserved.

During Ranade's stay in Poona in the hot season, the death of Krishnashastri Chiploonkar was a notable event. He was Ranade's senior by a few years but was his intimate friend who, it will be remembered, acted as a *panch* in the widow marriage debate in the presence of the Shankaracharya. He was like Ranade a Government servant but took part in many public activities. He was an active member of the Sarvajanic Sabha and wrote frequently in the *Dnyanaprakash*, supporting widow marriage and replying to the attacks of the Christian missionaries on Hindu customs, traditions and practices as irrational and unreasonable. He is rightly regarded as the father of modern Marathi prose, although he devoted himself chiefly to translating works from other languages into Marathi. *The Arabian Nights* and *Rasellas* are among these. Men like Bhandarkar and Telang especially went to Poona to attend and speak at the condolence meeting that was convened by the Sarvajanic Sabha. Among other speakers were Ranade and Mahadeo Moreshwar Kunte. Ranade characterised Chiploonkar as an ideal and dutiful citizen in his speech.

After the May vacation Ranade returned to Nasik. During the one year's period that he was there he delivered a number of lectures, most of which have remained somehow unreported. A report of one on Western learning appeared in the *Induprakash*, September 9, 1878. It was delivered on August 18, 1878. The gravamen of his discourse was that the English language opened up a vast arena of knowledge and people should learn that language for that purpose and not merely because they easily secured Government jobs by mastering it. He did not deprecate whatever there was in the ancient Sanskrit learning but it was positively deficient for purposes of leading an enlightened life in the new world. But it appears that his attack on the shortcomings of old learning was somewhat of a fighting character for there was much criticism of it in the newspapers and he was blamed for finding fault with the *Smritis* and *Shastras* without studying them ; but that was obviously an uninformed and prejudiced comment, for that was never Ranade's way. He had due respect for the past and he always pleaded for not breaking with it. He was a reformer and not a revolutionary.

Extension of the activities of the Sarvajanic Sabha was his favourite preoccupation even at Nasik. He was not satisfied with



writing memorials and representations and petitions and holding public meetings from time to time. So he conceived the plan of publishing a periodical on its behalf in which a variety of important questions of public weal might be continually discussed by competent students of affairs. Accordingly the *Quarterly Journal* of the Sabha was started from July 1878. The first issue contained a lengthy note by him on Famine Relief Policy in the Bombay Presidency and the texts of some of the petitions and representations submitted by the Sabha to the Government. Sitaram Hari Chiploonkar, a younger brother of Krishnashastri Chiploonkar was appointed its editor. He was already joint secretary of the Sabha. Ranade was closely associated with it for 15 years till he was appointed a Judge of the High Court in 1893.

The solid work that the journal accomplished needs separate and fuller treatment, but the text of the notice to its subscribers which appeared in the first issue might be quoted here as it explains the contemplated character of the journal. It said, "A desire has been expressed by several European and native well-wishers of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha that its proceedings should be published regularly in the form of a quarterly publication so as to be easily available for purposes of reference. The managing committee of the Sabha have accordingly resolved to try the experiment of such a periodical publication of the proceedings of the Sabha. Besides publishing the proceedings, it is proposed to take advantage of such a publication to insert independent communications, reviewing and discussing the more important political questions of the day. There are many topics upon which public opinion has to be created and formed before any formal action can be taken in respect of them by the Sabha. Such topics will find a fitting place in the independent section of the proposed quarterly. The journal will consist of 48 pages royal octavo to be priced at Rs. 4 per annum and it will be published in the months of July, October, January and April."

In this way Ranade's work for the all-sided regeneration of his country was proceeding smoothly. He completed over a year of his service at Nasik. At the end of April, 1879, he came to Poona for the summer vacation. This was the time when a number of well-to-do people came to Poona and enjoyed its equable climate. Among these were many of Ranade's friends and acquaintances who were actuated by the same patriotic and humanitarian spirit, though they were not his equals in intellectual

equipment. All the same they regarded Ranade as their leader and loved to advance the several causes he had espoused according to their ability and inclinations. The spring lectures began to be delivered from day-to-day as in the previous few years. There was an elocution encouragement society in existence at Poona since 1870 but only men participated in its activities. In this year, a similar organisation for women was started and the function passed off with much enthusiasm. Ramabai Ranade, who during her Nasik stay had got over much of her nervousness and was gaining more and more confidence to become a fitting spouse to her illustrious husband, participated prominently in this function. At Nasik she had made much progress in her English studies, the culinary art and domestic economics. A full account of the happy domestic life of the Ranades in those days has been sensitively recorded by her in her Marathi book of reminiscences. This Poona elocution club function for women took place on May 13, 1879.

But that very night Poona had to sustain the severe shock of an apparently well-organised plot to set fire to two historic buildings, viz. the Budhwar Wada and the Vishrambag Wada. The former was completely gutted in spite of strenuous efforts to put out the fire by the joint efforts of the fire brigade, the police, the military and hundreds of Poona citizens. On the foundation of this building now stands the Jijamata Garden at Poona in memory of Shivaji's mother. Parts of the Vishrambag Wada, including its front portion, were saved and some Poona Municipal offices are housed there at present. These two buildings were once the residences of the Peshwas and their destruction in this manner was naturally a matter of great grief to the people of Poona.

But matters did not rest there. Much trouble was brewing ; some of it was noticeable and some was not. The Government connected these conflagrations with what was then spoken of as Wasudeo Balvant's rebellion and suspected that English-educated people of Poona were in league with the rebel, Wasudeo Balvant, in this plan to overthrow British rule. The hypothesis was that the Poona Brahmins and even others who, but a few years ago had enjoyed *swaraj*, were smarting under foreign rule, were consumed inwardly by a desire to do away with the British Government, however much they might outwardly make protestations of loyalty and sing panegyrics on the benefits of British rule of law and order. Ranade was regarded as one of such people by at least some men



who influenced the Government's policies and actions. Anglo-Indian papers in Bombay also had similar suspicions and they encouraged the Government to be firm. The burning of the two historic places was regarded as a sort of dramatic signal for revolutionary action to begin everywhere.

Who was Wasudeo Balvant? His meteoric career is remarkable as much for his dauntless foolhardiness and utter miscalculation of the power of those whom he regarded as his enemies as for his complete selflessness and unsullied patriotism. After his failure to achieve his objective every one who can arrogate wisdom to himself after the event can well call him misguided, clumsy and crude, but his sincerity in what he attempted to do was absolutely such as was worthy of a hero and he certainly possessed this qualification of sincerity in a full measure, which has been considered essential in a hero by Carlyle. It is only 'demented' persons like him, who are hailed as heroes when they are successful but it is not given to all to be successful. Failure is, as it were, their crime. However that may be, to attempt to connect Ranade with these activities was too imaginative on the part of the authorities of the day, as it was found subsequently, and the cloud of suspicion over Ranade's head disappeared in course of time. History repeated itself in the case of Tilak also. There was, perhaps, some room for doubting his bona fides, because he was aggressive and militant in his criticism of Government policies though even he was always in favour of lawful and constitutional action. Only he did not make a fetish of such methods and freely said that anything was morally justifiable to put an end to British rule because it was oppressive and exploitative. Even he was quite reconciled to the British connection with its beneficent influences and would have remained content like Gokhale with dominion status or equality for India in every respect with the self-governing colonies, as his home rule movement on the eve of his death made amply clear. While Ranade who was only a suspect escaped with just a warning, Tilak had to pay a heavy price by three prosecutions for sedition, two imprisonments and persecution of an unprecedented character in connection with the Tai Maharaj adoption affair and consequential physical and mental suffering.

Wasudeo Balvant was born in 1845 at a small place called Shirdhon in Panvel taluka of Kolaba District. He studied English with a view to taking up a medical career, but gave it up and in 1863 he joined



the Commissariat (Military Accounts) Department as a clerk and continued to serve there for 15 years. He had an impulsive, explosive and sensitive temperament and the loss of the Mahratta empire kept him constantly restless. The immediate cause for this feeling to flare up in a flame was the refusal of leave to him by his superiors to see his ailing mother. It was sanctioned too late to let him see his mother alive. When he rushed to her bedside, she was already dead. From this time onwards he decided to devote himself to make efforts to overthrow the British *raj*. It was his conviction that only an armed rising could do this. He gave up his job, went about lecturing in several places but failed to rouse the literate and educated people so that they could fall in line with him. They had seen how the 1857 effort of the Indian aristocracy and princes had ended and the best among them like Rao Saheb Mandlik and others had condemned the effort as ill-advised and unfortunate and so they were not expected to follow Wasudeo's Balvant's hare-brained projects. So he turned his attention to the ignorant masses consisting of Kolis, Ramoshis and others. He organised dacoities in a number of places to collect money to pay his militia and for a few months his rebellion was the only subject people talked about.

This happened during March and April of 1879 and the two Peshwa palaces were set on fire in the middle of May. The Government connected these conflagrations with Phadke's rebellion and further suspected that educated people in Poona and their leader Ranade had entered into a conspiracy to overthrow British rule and were giving secret support to Phadke's activities. The Government had no evidence whatsoever to take action against Ranade but its displeasure was indicated by an order for his transfer to Dhulia, a place which was even less important than Nasik in those days. This order should have reached him through the Bombay High Court, but the Government had become so panicky that waiting for that small formality was even considered hazardous and the order was served on him directly by the Government. Some of Ranade's friends wanted that he should refuse to go on the plea of ill-health and his defective sight. But he declined to take the advice. He said that it would be very wrong and dishonest. As long as he wanted to remain in Government service he did not like to put up excuses. If ever the time for making excuses arrived, he would rather hand in his resignation, he said and quietly left



for Dhulia to take immediate charge of his work. He was so confident about ultimately convincing the Government of his innocence and about the total unreliability of the Government's suspicions that his peace of mind was not disturbed in the least. When he settled down in Dhulia he noticed that he did not receive his mail in time, that it was late by one delivery and that his closed letters were opened and repasted. Such letters as were open postcards were usually signed by people who were not known to him at all and often they bore the names of dacoits, associated with Wasudeo Balvant or others. He could easily conclude that the C.I.D. had a hand in it. The letters which he considered as fabrications were sent by him to the police for further investigation. This went on for about two months and then one day, the English Assistant Collector of Khandesh called on him and requested him to go with him for a ride in his horse-carriage. He apologised to Ranade for inspecting his mail under Government orders and conveyed to him that whatever misunderstanding there was had been cleared.

Even before coming to Dhulia Ranade was anxious to solve the mystery about the Budhwar and Vishrambag Wada conflagration. He did not believe that the fires had anything to do with Wasudeo Balvant's rising. He had become the subject of attacks in Anglo-Indian newspapers but he did not care for that. He instituted careful inquiries into the burning of the palaces and was able to trace its cause to a clerk whose name also happened to be Ranade. He was accused of certain defalcations and in order to hide his guilt he wanted to destroy the proof by burning the relevant documents. When this clerk's guilt was established he was handed over to the police for being dealt with according to law. He made an unreserved confession and it turned out that he had embezzled some Government money and to conceal his offence he sought to destroy record-books by setting fire to the whole building. Yet the steps taken against Ranade could not be retraced at once, but after watching his correspondence for a few months, the Government realised on what slender foundations, it had built a fanciful superstructure.

Phadke's adventure was also coming to an end. He realised that the human material on which he had relied for pursuing his ideal was unable to share his nobility, altruism and patriotic impulses. The people who had gathered under his standard were mostly

self-seekers, just thieves and robbers. He felt mortified and possibly repented for his rashness. But it was no use crying over spilt milk. Under the influence of a reverie he even once attempted to commit suicide before an idol in a temple. The Government was on his track and he was at last captured on July 21, 1879, while asleep with exhaustion and hunger, by Major Daniell and Sayed Abdul Haque, Police Commissioner of Hyderabad, at Dever Nadgi in Kaladagi district. He was put up for trial under charges of "collection of men, arms, ammunitions or otherwise preparing to wage war with the intention of either waging or being prepared to wage war against the Queen" and also for "exciting feelings of disaffection against the Government". The trial ended in transportation for life being awarded to Phadke. He was taken to Aden where he died on February 17, 1883.

Phadke's examination-in-chief, cross-examination and the evidence adduced in support of the charges against him made it quite clear that Ranade had no connection whatsoever with the dacoits or Phadke and Phadke's own diary and autobiography showed what a highly-strung, irrepressible spirit he himself was. Two extracts from his autobiography, which formed part of evidence in the Court may be given here. "Finding there is no success to be obtained in this world, I having gone to the world above should plead on behalf of the people of India. My life alone will not be thus given, but thousands of others will be killed for I was not alone in this affair. One person cannot manage a whole family ; then how is a state to be managed by one? Bearing this in mind, I commenced this work, but the result has not been good. So having come here, I am engaged in prayer." Again, "I have only seven days to live. So I make a bow at the feet of all of you my brethren, inhabitants of India and give up my life for you and will remain pleading for you in the just court of God. I pray to God that he may take my life as a sacrifice for your welfare and to you all I bid farewell."

What might have been, therefore, Ranade's attitude towards a person of Phadke's calibre? There were rumours that Phadke sometimes met Ranade surreptitiously at midnight and that Ranade went on blessing his adventure but all this turned out to be foamy gossip since nothing clung to Ranade in the trial. We are therefore left only to guess. Ranade's close associate, Sarvajanic Kaka, appeared on Phadke's behalf in the lower court but



gave up the brief because he found it indefensible. Mahadeo Chimnaji Apte, an admirer of Ranade and uncle of the well-known Marathi novelist, Hari Narayan Apte, appeared on his behalf to prefer an appeal but the appeal was dismissed. These two men could not have thought of defending a seditionist, armed rebel and a dacoit, merely in a professional capacity. They must have felt respect and pity for one whom they regarded as a misguided man, albeit of a high moral stature. It may be presumed, therefore, that Ranade held the same view. Every intelligent person must have concluded that Phadke was a patriot *par excellence*. Again the comments appearing in the *Induprakash*, the *Deccan Star* and the *Shivaji* may be regarded as reliable indications of how the educated classes looked upon this Phadke episode. The first two have referred to the presentation of flowers to the prisoner at the Poona station by an English lady out of sheer admiration for the heroic patriot. The *Induprakash*, with which Ranade was closely associated, says in its leading article in its issue for November 24, 1879: "When Wasudeo was carried from the court-house after his conviction, some people in the crowd shouted out 'Success to Wasudeo' (Wasudeoki Jay). Upon this, the arch enemies of Brahmans at once declared that the Brahmans of Poona were favourable to Wasudeo's enterprise. If this reasoning is valid, a conclusion equally unfavourable to Europeans could be drawn from a fact which has been published. When Wasudeo was brought to the Poona Railway Station after his conviction, a European lady presented him with a bunch of flowers. From this incident it might be inferred with equal justice that European ladies were favourable to Wasudeo's cause. But no sane person would dream of drawing this inference. If this be so, the other opinion with respect to Brahmans is equally untenable. Judges often show compassion in passing sentences but from this no one would think of inferring that they looked upon crime with partiality. Only a few months ago, one Casiratu, an Italian, was charged with committing murder at Simla and the European community of that station raised subscriptions in order to enable him to engage counsel to make his defence. Would any human being be justified from this fact in saying that the subscribers approved of the deed? From the publication of his diary and the facts which came out during the trial, it is clear that the man is demented and surely there could have been no harm in expressing sympathy with him



in his awful position.”

*The Deccan Star* was edited by M. B. Namjoshi, a member of the Sarvajanic Sabha and a man interested in the industrial progress of India and an associate of Ranade. This paper was later incorporated in the *Mahratta* started by the Tilak-Agarkar group. In its leading article for November 23, 1879 it said : “ In the eyes of his countrymen Wasudeo Balvant Phadke did not commit any wrong. We agree with Mr. Newnham that Wasudeo did not do any good to people on whose behalf he laboured ; but all true Englishmen must sympathise with him. This is evident from the fact that an English lady thought it proper to present Wasudeo with a nosegay at the railway station when he was carried away from Poona. Besides, our rulers are Christians who are commanded by their religion to love their neighbours as themselves. Wasudeo, though a Brahman, showed a truly Christian spirit when he tried to relieve the misery of his countrymen. Those who censure Wasudeo for pursuing the course which he did, are simply dissemblers. When war was raging between Great Britain and her American Colonies, one Dean Tucker wrote a pamphlet to show that the separation of the American Colonies from the mother country would be no loss to the latter, but a clear gain to her. This opinion did not find favour at the time ; but we know from history that Dean Tucker was the only man who thoroughly understood the question and that his opinion was right. Wasudeo deserves the highest praise not only from all natives, but even from Englishmen who wish for the prosperity of Her Majesty’s Eastern Empire. By sacrificing himself he has averted danger which sooner or later must follow intolerable oppression. We consider him as the harbinger of a bright future for India.”

Whatever Ranade’s opinion about Phadke’s adventure as such was, what he did after his trial was over is far more important. His survey of the socio-economic conditions of those days was penetrating. He looked upon Phadke’s rising as only a symptom, a factor, a facet or a phase of the whole situation. He made this survey in the *Sarvajanic Sabha Quarterly* in 1879 in the letters on the Deccan riots. Dacoities, lootings, incendiarism and rebellion — all formed a train for which there was a single potent cause responsible. That cause, according to him, was necessarily economic. It was the pitiable poverty of the people. He pointed out that in concentrating attention only on the political character of all these



happenings the Government was placing its emphasis on a wrong place. There was no political motive in most of the dacoities and lootings and incendiarism. Everything was being ascribed to Phadke's activity, but quite mistakenly. The mystery of the Poona conflagrations was already explained. He endeavoured to explain the looting and dacoities like a competent statistician. He studied all records and registers of crime deeply and worked out how many people were concerned in it, to which community they belonged, whether that was their traditional or occasional activity, and wrote a report. He reached the conclusion that utter poverty of the people was the fundamental cause of all crime. That poverty was due to the Government's greedy policy of revising and raising land assessments and recovering them extortionately through unsympathetic officers. There were no cottage industries left through which the poor peasantry could supplement their incomes and as the people were disarmed, they could not stand assaults and threats thereof from the armed robbers.

Why Ranade had to take all this trouble must also be explained. Sir Richard Temple, the then Governor of Bombay who was responsible for Ranade's transfer to Nasik and subsequently to Dhulia, believed that the Poona Brahmins were to some extent responsible for the unrest that prevailed in Poona and neighbouring areas. It was necessary to counteract this belief which had no foundation whatsoever and which was no more than a pet superstition of the panic-stricken. After he returned to England he wrote a book called *India in 1880* and even in that book he put down his mere suspicion as a reality. He wrote that the Mahrattas were constantly reminded of their past glory such as was contained in their having humbled the Muslim invaders and therefore the Government must be ever vigilant about these people residing in the Sahyadri ranges and other centres. This he said with reference to Phadke's rebellion and then asserted, "The Brahmin leader and his immediate adherents were avowedly forming a conspiracy against Government". In conclusion he said, "Though any exaggeration of the importance of such silly and clumsy designs ought to be avoided, still these occurrences demand the thoughtful attention of politicians". One reason why Sir Richard resigned and went to England was that Lord Beaconsfield's Government in England had been unseated and the Liberal Party with Gladstone as Prime Minister had come to power. Lord



Lytton also gave up his Viceroyalty prematurely for the same reason. With Gladstone's coming to power Lord Ripon was sent out to India as Viceroy and Sir James Fergusson was appointed Governor of Bombay and an era of more sympathetic rule was ushered in.

Nothing very important happened during the course of 1880. Sarvajanic Kaka died on July 25, 1880 and by his death Ranade lost a trusted friend of great executive ability. Ranade took the lead in holding a condolence meeting and raising a memorial to him. A building in Bhavani Peth, Poona was purchased for housing the Sarvajanic Sabha office and a hall in it was named after Sarvajanic Kaka. Perhaps the most important fact was that all misunderstandings about Ranade in the Government circles were removed and he was appointed Presidency Magistrate in Bombay in January 1881. During the course of 1880 his claims for advancement to the position of the Sessions Judge, Thana, had been passed over, because his connection with the popular cause was still disliked. On this occasion Sir Michael Westrop, Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court had written to him : "Your writings come in the way of your promotion. If you want promotion, spare these great efforts." Ranade's reply was to the effect that he was very grateful for the suggestion made by his lordship but so far as he was concerned, his wants were few and he could live on little. As far as his country's welfare was concerned he could not but speak out what seemed true to him.

Till Ranade was appointed Presidency Magistrate, his legal reputation had been based upon his knowledge of civil law, but as Presidency Magistrate he had to deal with criminal law as well. It soon became clear that he was equally well up in that branch of law. He held charge of this post for only three months but even in this short period he had occasion to try a European whom he sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for six months for stealing Rs. 50. A little before he tried this case, he had awarded only one month's simple imprisonment to a Hindu who had tried to steal a hundred rupee note that he had been sent to change in the market. Anglo-Indian papers raised a hue and cry without going into the merits of either cases and accused him of racial bias. However, Mr. Coglein, who was then District Judge at Thana intervened on his behalf and wrote a letter to the *Times of India* under the pseudonym 'Justice' in which he clearly pointed out the difference between the two cases and gave complete



justification of Ranade's decisions as perfectly fair. The Hindu offender had a clean past record and had apparently succumbed to a sudden temptation of making easy money while the European's crime was premeditated and circumstantial evidence proved that he was prepared to perpetrate more crimes if necessary, because he had broken into the room of a railway guard at night, opened his money-box and taken all he could get. He had also a loaded revolver on his person which showed that he might have used it to wound or murder a person, had the need for it arisen. That was Ranade's summing up and it was fully vindicated by Mr. Coglein and the outcry in the press against Ranade died down.

Ranade was quite happy for these three months in the midst of his Bombay friends like Bhandarkar, Telang, Pherozeshah Mehta and others and discussions on public questions among them always took place. He gave a number of discourses at the Prarthana Samaj and a notable speech as President of the Elocution Encouragement Society's annual function. This institution was started by Jagannath Shankarshet in 1867 and Ranade had participated in its work from the beginning. On February 17, 1881, he gave his presidential address in which he reviewed the progress Marathi literature had made during the sixty years since the beginning of British rule. It was a highly informative speech in which he said that there were only 60 printing presses and less than 1,000 books were published in 60 years and they included school textbooks, novels, historical works and religious works. He found this progress quite disappointing and he showed his resentment at the way people were taking it easy. In his Poona effort at organising the authors and writers and publication of their work, his experience was not very encouraging and that obsession might have been responsible for the bitter remarks he made in his Bombay speech against the passivity of the people. He was dejected that people were acquiring modern Western knowledge only superficially and were not using it after digesting it for the advancement of their countrymen. How impatient and indignant he had become on this occasion may be judged from the translated extract from his speech. For a moment it appeared as if he had abandoned his peaceful, non-violent and optimistic attitude. He said, "We are an extremely dense, stolid and immobile people. Why? Because the very basis on which our society is founded is defective. We have regarded it as axiomatic that only a particular set of people should bother about matters

concerning learning and knowledge. This was a grave error, and it was perpetuated. The consequence is that we are still where the other countries were before the art of printing was invented. We are only beasts of burden. We do not care to get at the root of any phenomenon. We have not brought even one hundredth of the knowledge that others have carried away from here. All progress in knowledge and science is built on what the Europeans took away from India, but we have not kept pace with them. People will not read books even if they are offered free by charging only postage. Such is our gross indifference. It is inconceivable when this state of things is going to change. Perhaps some uncommon catastrophe will lead to our awakening."



## VII

### BACK TO POONA FOR TWELVE YEARS

WITHIN THREE months of his tenure as Presidency Magistrate in Bombay, Ranade received orders to take charge as Subordinate Judge at Poona. He began his work in that capacity in April 1881, but was soon appointed assistant to Dr. A. J. Pollen, with the designation Assistant Special Judge, to supervise cases that arose out of the implementation of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act. In that capacity he was required to do a good deal of touring in the rural areas of Poona and Satara initially and Ahmednagar and Sholapur districts subsequently. Ranade put his whole heart into the work and was never tired of going to the remotest or smallest village without caring for special comfort or convenience. He was happy that he could study the condition of the Deccan peasantry so closely and well. His interest in this subject was perennial as his work during the famine of 1866-67 and his writings in the *Sarvajanik Sabha Quarterly* make evident.

Taking such deep interest in the problems of the peasantry was not the practice of his predecessors. They used to call for papers at taluka headquarters and give their decisions in the light of their study and personal inquiries. Ramabai who accompanied him in these tours has recorded graphic and intimate descriptions of these tours in her book of reminiscences. When she once suggested to him to follow his predecessors' practice and not to take too much trouble and thus risk his health in the insanitary and unhygienic places in the villages, Ranade said, "The salary and the travelling allowance that Government gives us are not meant for touring at ease. If I sent for records and waited at a taluka headquarter for them to come, it is quite possible that interested and smart people would give me just such a picture of the real situation as they wished and the real condition of the villagers would remain concealed or get distorted. What Government wants responsible and

highly paid officers to do is to get at the truth and suggest remedies. Some people do not realise this well and lazily care more for their own comfort and convenience than for doing their duty well. I do not want to be one of them. If I go about and meet people myself and talk to them, the young and the old and their womenfolk, such personal contact helps me to study their condition correctly and efficiently." In this way, Ranade convinced his wife about the propriety of what he was doing and never again did she object to his taking pains. On the other hand she prepared herself to share with him whatever troubles and hardships his touring involved.

The Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act was passed in the light of the many suggestions that Ranade himself had previously made. Even though it was not as satisfactory a measure as Ranade would have liked it to be, it was an advance in the right direction and conferred some benefit on the peasants and so there is no wonder that Ranade took a kind of personal delight in helping its implementation. One of the main features of this legislative measure was the setting up of conciliators whose duty it was to try to settle disputes without the expensive process of having recourse to law courts. As it was found that it was not always easy to secure reliable and influential persons to act as conciliators, repeal of this Act was once thought of in Government quarters. Ranade's enthusiastic work and advocacy of its utility saved it from being repealed. For a short period, he was appointed Judge of the Small Causes Court at Poona and the work he liked was interrupted. When, however, Dr. A. J. Pollen, who fully knew the worth of his assistant and had given him full scope and freedom of action, went on furlough and left for Europe, Ranade was appointed Acting Chief Special Judge and thus he returned to the work of administering the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act. Anglo-Indian papers thought it was a great breach of privilege on the ground that some I.C.S. Judge was not appointed. The Government took no notice of this comment and in 1887 he was permanently appointed to that post. The Anglo-Indian papers again raised an outcry but to no purpose. Ranade held this post till he was raised to the High Court Bench in 1893.

In the administrative report for 1881, the Government referred to Ranade's opinion about keeping the Act in force and amending it suitably, in these words : "A gentleman whose grasp of mind and keen powers of observation entitle his opinions to great



weight". In the report for 1882, Dr. Pollen said, "His (Ranade's) view upon the subject are entitled to the greatest respect and consideration for he has been able to combine with his great natural powers of observation special facilities for becoming practically acquainted with all the details of the question." In 1883, a conference of officers in the Judicial Department was held at Poona when Dr. Pollen had remarked that the available conciliators in most cases were not conversant with judicial procedure and were illiterate men. Ranade had met this objection by saying that even if they were illiterate and ignorant of formal procedure as such, they were men of great common sense and had the necessary knowledge of the parties to a dispute, being local people and, therefore, there was a fair prospect of substantial justice at their hands, even if lawful, formal, procedural decisions might not be procurable. In this way Ranade always ran to the rescue of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act and it was saved permanently.

In May 1885, Lord Reay who had succeeded Sir James Fergusson as Governor of Bombay nominated Ranade to the position of Law Member of the Bombay Legislative Council, even while he held his post of Special Judge. The place to which Ranade was appointed was previously held by an English I.C.S. and as Ranade was an 'Uncovenanted' Indian, there was again some public discussion about the propriety of violating conventions. But Lord Reay who was a Liberal and a man of generous impulses and therefore had become very popular among Indians, adhered to his decision of breaking the convention. In a highly appreciative letter which he wrote to Ranade offering him this position, he said that he was aware that Ranade would not be able to attend all meetings of the Council particularly those that would be held in Bombay, but even his occasional presence would afford the Government opportunities to benefit by Ranade's knowledge and earnestness for public weal and therefore he should not decline the offer. Ranade accepted the offer and attended the monsoon session of the Bombay Legislative Council at Poona. In 1886, he was appointed a member of the Finance Committee in addition to his membership of the Council. This was a Committee of the Government of India and it was entrusted with the task of studying the income and expenditure of all India and suggesting measures of economy and retrenchment. It was Lord Reay again who knew that Ranade was very well posted up in these matters and so



recommended Ranade for inclusion as representative of the Government of Bombay in the Finance Committee and had his way.

This committee had very limited powers and the Government of India suddenly became very niggardly in the matter of extending its duration. Yet Ranade had a full year's opportunity to tour round the country by visiting Simla, Calcutta, Madras and other places. By the end of 1886, the Government suddenly brought its work of inquiry to a stop and entrusted it to a single Commissioner to finish it. How Ranade utilised his opportunity has been explained by him in a letter written to his friend and the well-known statistician, Rao Bahadur G. V. Joshi. Ranade said, "I prize my connection with it (Committee) chiefly for the rare opportunities it affords of learning a good many details of large questions, the papers regarding which could not otherwise have been made available to us. Every subject I take up requires a good deal of reading. I take notes freely and these notes are utilised by being turned to account in a formal official note which I submit to the Committee or rather the more prominent of its members for correction. After passing through this test, I get it printed and circulated." Ranade was in the habit of continually correcting proofs of his writing by making additions and alterations. This endless process exhausted the patience of the Simla printer of the Finance Committee and so he followed the practice of printing off all matter that was finalised and approved in the manuscript, thus not allowing Ranade to continue his process of incessant additions and alterations !

Ranade wrote a number of minutes of dissent to the Committee's report. That was only to be expected of an Indian nationalist and patriotic public man of his calibre and character. The majority recommended that in the Legal Department the number of sub-judges should be curtailed and when new sub-judges were recruited they should be taken on revised, diminished scales. Ranade objected to these proposals as ill-conceived and short-sighted. The majority further recommended that retrenchment should also be effected in the Education Department. Nothing could be more repugnant to Ranade than starving the Education Department and he wrote a note of dissent. There were some more bigger or smaller matters on which he differed from the majority. Whatever Ranade had said on several matters of public importance was later closely studied by Gokhale and he frequently referred to Ranade's views in his evidence before the Welby Commission



later in 1897 and subsequently in his many Council speeches and other public utterances. For his valuable work on the Finance Committee, Ranade was made Companion of the Indian Empire in 1887. Needless to say that this recognition came to him altogether unsought.

For about a year Ranade was mostly engrossed in this Committee's work. While away from Poona a Bill to amend the Vatandars Act came up before the Bombay Legislative Council which aimed at striking at the time-honoured rights of the Vatandars. Ranade wrote a full note on this amending Bill and suggested his own amendments. He was a member of the Select Committee on the Bill but he could not give expression to all that he thought about it in the Select Committee's report. He, therefore, contributed a separate, comprehensive article on the subject to the *Quarterly Journal* of the Sarvajanik Sabha. It is worthy of perusal in order to understand the historical background and functions of the Vatandars. When the Select Committee's report was submitted to the Council and the Bill came up for the second reading, a Government spokesman pleaded that since Ranade who had suggested a number of amendments was not present to justify them, the second reading should be postponed. Ranade knew that it was not convenient for him as a Government servant, to say all that he felt on certain matters but he took pains to transmit all his ideas to some other suitable and intrepid non-official member of the Council and carried out his object. Thus he managed to make his council membership quite fruitful.

As a measure of retrenchment, the Government thought of closing the Deccan College by handing it over to the newly established Deccan Education Society. Accordingly negotiations were proceeding between the Society and the Government. Tilak, Agarkar and Namjoshi were the spokesmen of the Society in these negotiations. The negotiations ultimately fell through because the Government insisted on a European Principal and the Professor of English language and literature being an Englishman. The conditions were totally unacceptable to the Society. Ranade who was then in Calcutta in connection with the Finance Committee's work was telegraphically consulted. Ranade was not in favour of closing the Deccan College in this way, but he did not want to displease either Lord Reay or Tilak and Agarkar. He managed to have a public meeting of the citizens of Poona which pointed



out that the Deccan College was raised out of the fund that was utilised by the Peshwas to distribute presents and patronage to deserving Brahmins every year. The Deccan College was in a sense a memorial of that tradition of patronising learning. Once it was merged with the Fergusson College, only a grant to the Fergusson College would remain. A memorial quite skilfully worded was sent to the Government. The negotiations with the Deccan Education Society also fell through and the Deccan College was saved. It still exists as the Deccan Institute of Post-Graduate Research and Ranade's object stands fulfilled.

Ramabai Ranade has delicately narrated how Ranade used to be mindful about proper arrangements regarding food and accommodation of his clerks and peons who accompanied him in his tours and how he utilised his leisure to establish contacts with the villagers in order to collect details about their social and economic condition. He was never tired of storing his mind with such details. He took intimate interest in their narrations and made his mental notes. He induced even Ramabai to mix among the womenfolk on one pretext or another and get friendly with them and gather details about what progress girls' education was making, etc.

One little story is worth recording here. While touring once in Satara district, Ranade happened to camp at Koregaon. Ranade and his wife used to travel in a horse-carriage and half a dozen bullock carts were engaged for carrying his personal and official luggage. As Ranade had taken no exercise that morning he got down from his carriage and asked Ramabai to wait there till the carts arrived and then proceed along with them about two miles ahead. As she was alone and wanted to kill time she took up the horsewhip and began to strike it against the low branches of a mango tree which were laden with tempting green fruits. She collected a good many fruit. But while striking the whip a gold bracelet slipped off and could not be traced even after a vigorous search with the help of the men in her entourage. She felt much embarrassed for that loss and for her childish desire to collect green mangoes, which probably belonged to some one and therefore her action amounted to theft. When she met her husband, she was depressed and downhearted. On being questioned, she apologetically related what had happened. Ranade said he was happy that she herself had realised her error and by way of



punishment he said he would not replace her gold bangle.

As Ranade was consoling her, he also voluntarily pleaded guilty to an act of inadvertence. He had lost his tiny tin snuff-box. It was not silver, it only looked like it, having become bright and polished by constant use. He said the money values of the bracelet and the box were an unimportant matter. What mattered was both husband and wife had behaved carelessly. In spite of such light-hearted talk Ramabai continued to be sullen all the day. At last when he sat down for his evening meal, he jocularly demanded of the cook the pickle made of the green mangoes and good-humouredly observed : "It must be very tasteful indeed ; it has cost Rs. 75 ". There was no irony or sarcasm in his tone, but just mirthful banter. The reference to Rs. 75 was to the probable money value of the gold bangle. Ranade once again consoled Ramabai and asked her to forget all about the loss of the bangle. This incident happened somewhere in 1883-84.

After his work as member of the Finance Committee was over, Ranade took charge of his work as permanent special judge in charge of the administration of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act and resumed his tours in Poona, Satara, Ahmednagar and Sholapur districts. Eight months in a year had thus to be spent in touring. This went on continuously from 1888 to 1891. While camping at Karmala in Sholapur District in February 1891, Ranade had a severe attack of a virulent type of cholera. It threatened to be almost a fatal illness. Ranade never hesitated to hold his office in village *chavdis* or Maruti temples, or even in a tent, but took the usual precautions of taking filtered and boiled water and had his own cook with him. But he caught the contagion nevertheless. February 26, 27 and 28 were crucial days in that year because his life was trembling in the balance and it was only because Ramabai had become highly intelligent and resourceful and was able to keep her presence of mind coupled with devoted personal nursing that Ranade's life was saved. Her homely treatment would not succeed. A local doctor was sent for. He was in constant attendance. In the meanwhile, Ramabai had arranged to telegraph to Dr. Vishram Ghole and Ranade's sister at Poona. The railway station was 13 miles off from Karmala and therefore a horse-carriage was kept ready at the station to take Dr. Vishram and Ranade's sister to Ranade's sick-bed. The local doctor, who was a Mussalman, was exerting his best to save him,



but for two days Ranade's condition showed no signs of improvement.

Ranade had grown too weak to speak, but he softly assured Ramabai that he would soon be out of danger. He was feeling confident that his end had not come so near. Ramabai, however, was getting more and more disheartened. Ranade almost completely lost his voice and then she became desperate. As if in a trance, she ran up to the inner shrine of the temple in which they had camped and full of tears and with a choked throat she began to pray. As she sobbed her prayer, she experienced a fantasy which was highly symbolic and significant. Ramabai's description of this experience is worth perusal in the original in her book of reminiscences. The purport of it is that a great calamity threatened to overtake a religious congregation, but the providential appearance of a Divine Being resulted in a narrow escape. While in this condition, some one called her out, because Ranade wanted her by his side. The Muslim doctor asked Ramabai to administer to Ranade the Ayurvedic medicine she had with her. After that slow improvement was discernible. Next morning Dr. Vishram arrived and under his treatment Ranade gradually recovered but took two months to be quite well. Dr. Vishram administered to him some dozes of brandy as an emergency measure. Ranade would not take brandy but Dr. Vishram told him that he was giving it to him only because he was helpless and to save his life by hook or crook was his paramount duty. Until they reached Poona, Dr. Vishram forced Ranade to submit to his treatment, and Ranade submitted to him with the greatest reluctance. He was removed to Poona with the utmost care. From Poona station he was removed to his house in a *mena*, which is a closed palanquin lifted and carried by four persons. It took two months for him to be well again. His two brothers and Principal Waman Abaji Modak and his childhood companions, the Kirtane brothers, were in constant attendance on him till he was his own self again.

Ranade became a subject of adverse public comment in connection with the weddings of his two brothers because in deference to the wishes of his mother he agreed to receive dowry on both occasions. The elder of the two step-brothers was married in 1880 at a rather early age and the other was married in 1884. Readers will remember how respectfully and with what great consideration Ranade treated his step-mother and all the ladies of the



household. After his father's death he was very particular in taking care that no occasion must arise to hurt her feelings. Ranade felt that with her own young daughter-in-law about her she would feel happier and so he consented to have one of his brothers married rather early and he was also anxious to see that his mother was satisfied that everything in connection with the marriage was gone through just as she wished. Therefore, the dowry was there. There was repetition of the same procedure on the occasion of his other brother's marriage. Now, in so far as dowry is a voluntarily made present to a daughter and her spouse, it is not an objectionable practice at all. It is help given to the new couple to settle in life. Only when the demand becomes extortionate, and bargaining is resorted to it becomes an objectionable and unsocial or even anti-social practice. That is or should be the correct position of a social reformer in regard to acceptance of dowry and Ranade is not known to have departed from this position. Yet as on the occasion of his second marriage, Ranade was criticised severely for maintaining divorce between practice and precept. It is true that in his personal life, he often behaved like this as when he submitted to *Prayaschitta* only to oblige his friends when he did not make a fetish of very strict conformity to principles.

The story of this *Prayaschitta* or purificatory rite may be conveniently related here. On October 14, 1892, the Panch Houd Mission (St. Mary's Convent) a Christian missionary institution, invited a few Poona notables for a lecture. They included Ranade, Bhandarkar, Tilak and Gokhale. After the lecture tea was served to the guests. Nobody knew that it was part of the programme, yet not to offend the host, they took tea and some of them might have even taken a biscuit or two with it. All of them now could be charged with having accepted Christian hospitality and broken caste. Gopalrao Joshi, who was said to be a convert to Christianity but really believed in no religion whatever had deliberately laid this trap for these Poona celebrities in order to place the Poona Hindu leaders in an awkward position and enjoy the resulting fun. Joshi was a busybody and a cynic although he was the man who had a few years ago sent his young wife to America for medical education. She stayed in those days in a foreign land and came back as Dr. Anandibai Joshi but did not live long. Perhaps she was the first Brahmin woman from Western India to go in a ship to America. After her death Joshi became more or less an eccentric person



or even possibly demented. He once published a chart in a Poona newspaper showing how exactly the guests of different castes were seated at a banquet given by Ranade in honour of his then England-returned young friend Sir Moropant Joshi. This was followed by an account of this Panch Houd Mission function. As a matter of fact Ranade had neither taken tea nor biscuits. He had only touched the cup as a mark of courtesy and kept it down. But these incidents were enough to rouse the Poona orthodoxy to action against the social reformers.

Led by Sardar Balasaheb Natu, the Poona orthodox gentry lodged a complaint in the court of the Shankaracharya and prayed for social boycott until the accused made suitable amends. A list of 42 accused was prepared. Ranade and Tilak decided to appear before this court of the Shankaracharya while others did not treat the whole proceeding seriously because the court had no power whatever to enforce its verdict. Ranade was severely criticised by his own friends in the social reform camp for submitting himself to the jurisdiction of the Shankaracharya's authority and abandoning his colleagues in the cause of social reform. If no great principle was involved Ranade was always willing to respect the authority of religious heads. In a letter addressed to Telang in this connection he said, "The position that reformers ought regard all ecclesiastical authorities as their open enemies is one which nobody in active life will venture on urging for one moment. These authorities have their uses and no great or good purpose is served by ignoring them or treating them with contempt. There are some matters in which we must stand out but there is no reason why we should stand out on all matters simply for the fun of the thing. It is these public interests which move me.... Even if the Swami was not prepared to help me on all lines, I should prefer to see him in a mind to realise that we had a side to be considered and to be agreeable to a fair compromise."

This position was very similar to the one that Tilak had taken up and therefore they were bracketed together. Tilak's stand was that society had a right to arraign offenders against its time-honoured customs and traditions and if any change in them was to be brought about, it should be done with the sanction of the religious heads. He knew full well that he had not behaved as an irreligious offender but he stood by the principle that society had a right to watch the conduct of its leading constituents and



take them to task if necessary. The whole dispute ultimately ended in the award of a light punishment like a pilgrimage to Banaras.

But this ostracism of the social reformers, including Tilak, by the Poona orthodoxy lasted for about two years and during this period, Tilak found it difficult to get Brahmin cooks and priests for religious functions in his household and girls from neighbouring houses who came to play with Tilak's daughters would not accept water from Tilak's household even if they were thirsty. He managed to get cooks from other places. Ranade maintained two Brahmin priests in his household for such purposes on the basis of annual payment. They were also useful for similar functions at the houses of Ranade's friends. Yet the ladies of the families of the boycotted persons found it irksome. Their relatives would not come to them and they could not go to their relatives for social visits. At last in order to oblige a friend Ranade agreed to go through *Prayaschitta*, because the friend insisted he would not go through it alone. A number of the boycotted people went through it jointly. It is interesting to see how Ranade placed domestic peace and happiness above all public obligations in this connection. The friend who insisted on Ranade going through *Prayaschitta* had an aged father and there was to be a wedding in the house. The son, his wife and children could not participate in it unless they had gone through this *Prayaschitta*. So they went to stay with Ranade at Lonavla where he had gone for the summer vacation. But his father could not bear this and he entreated his son not to be adamant. On being asked for his advice, Ranade frankly said that if he was in his friend's position he would rather please his father than make a fetish of a principle. Indeed, Ranade had previously submitted to his father's wishes in so important a matter as his own second marriage. Ranade's friend, therefore said, that he would submit to *Prayaschitta* only if Ranade also kept him company. Ranade said he had no objection.

Ramabai was surprised at Ranade's consent, because he had given the consent only to oblige a friend and his aged father, after having held out for nearly two years. She was even sorry for this and was rather annoyed. She found that Ranade had no feeling whatsoever of uneasiness or remorse and he was going through his routine as usual, in spite of the criticism of his conduct that was being made in private and public. At last she asked him about it, when he said he had acted after full deliberation and his



conscience was clear. So whatever people said about it did not affect him. One had to take decisions in conflicting situations with only one's inner God as one's witness and be prepared for the consequences. When Ranade's friend returned from Poona after attending the wedding, Ranade asked him about his father's reaction. The friend said that his father was overwhelmed by emotion because of his respectful surrender and his happiness was ecstatic. He also admitted that father's happiness made son also extremely happy. Ramabai was present at this conversation and fully realised the wisdom of Ranade's advice to his friend. It seems that Ranade had fixed certain priorities and preferences in regard to private conduct and therefore he had no qualms of conscience when he seemed to be sacrificing the principles he expounded in his public speeches or writings.

Ranade ardently believed that Indian womanhood had to be helped to come into its own and to occupy a place of equality and honour in Indian society. In his opinion women occupied such a status in ancient Hindu society and the deterioration had started with foreign invasions and was complete during the days of Muslim domination. What great pains he continuously took to educate his own illiterate wife has already been seen. In 1882, Sir William Wedderburn was appointed Collector of Poona. Ranade and he became great friends. Wedderburn shared many of Ranade's views. For instance, Wedderburn held that a permanent settlement of land revenue was necessary everywhere in India and the peasantry must be helped to get out of its indebtedness through co-operative credit societies. Wedderburn also was in sympathy with Ranade's ideas about promoting women's education and gave active help by making a donation of Rs. 1,000 in memory of his elder brother. Ranade collected a few thousand rupees with his donation as a nucleus and in July 1882, he called a meeting of friends and sympathisers of women's education and resolved upon starting a high school for girls. Bhandarkar, Modak, Pandit and others were with Ranade. Shankar Pandurang Pandit was very prominent in leading a deputation to the Government in this behalf. Assurance of help was given and the school was started on *Vijayadashami* in September 1882. The site of Huzur Paga was given for this purpose by the Government and the school is known to this day as Huzur Paga School for Girls.

This was considered revolutionary in those days and orthodox



newspapers like the *Poona Vaibhava* began to write without any restraint about Ranade and others. The paper made most objectionable and defamatory statements about Ranade and Pandit and Englishmen and Englishwomen. Wedderburn came to know about this and he requested Ranade to advise the *Poona Vaibhava* not to indulge in such fanciful and frivolous writing. Ranade sent for its editor and talked the matter over with him. He agreed to apologise in writing and when the apology was published, others who were indulging in irresponsible and vulgar vapourings were also silenced, but for a year or so the promoters of the Female High School and the girls attending it had rather an anxious time to go through. In the second year of the *Kesari* there was some adverse comment about the courses of study and methods of teaching in the High School, presumably made by Tilak, but Agarkar replied to it in the same paper as uninformed and baseless comment. The *Dnyana-prakash*, under Ranade's inspiration also pointed out that there was nothing in the courses of study that would militate against Hindu religion and traditions and further said that the good work that the School was doing deserved the support of all enlightened Indians. Ramabai also took a leading part in popularising this school among Poona's leading families.

Once again the Female High School became the target of attack from Prof. Shridhar Ganesh Jinsivale, who was a curious mixture of orthodox and protestant views. He had once the ambition of teaching his own wife up to the B.A. standard, but once the same gentleman had slapped her because her cooking had gone wrong. He held that the Vedas had no Divine origin but that they were man-made. He was a well-read person and had a retentive memory, but had apparently an unbalanced mind and an eccentric temperament. He once roundly charged the English headmistress of the Female High School with having fed some girls in the boarding establishment of the school with left-overs from her table. The headmistress threatened him with a libel suit in the event of his declining to apologise or offer a satisfactory explanation. He had ultimately to apologise after trying to give explanations that were not found satisfactory. Such were the vicissitudes through which women's education in Poona had to advance.

The Shardasadan School of Pandita Ramabai was founded by her in Poona in 1890. She was a very remarkable woman. Daughter of one Anant Shastri Dongre, she had gone away to



Calcutta with him as a child where she pursued the study of Sanskrit so as to earn for her the title Pandita. Later she passed under the influence of Christian missionaries whose piety and humanity greatly appealed to her. She was sent to America for more education, where she became a convert to Christianity. She had evoked the admiration of the missionaries and her learning impressed them very much. Her intellectual attainments won her many admirers in India also. It would seem that she had no dearth of money for carrying on philanthropic and humanitarian activities. She came to Poona and by her eloquence made a very good impression. She unfolded her plan of founding the Sharda-sadan, a temple dedicated to Saraswati, Goddess of arts and learning, for the benefit of poor and helpless Hindu widows and even other girls and women. It was a residential school and the inmates of the school were constantly thrown in the company of the Christian missionary teachers of the Shardasadan. Ranade, Bhandarkar and Agarkar enthusiastically welcomed this institution in Poona and even became members of the advisory committee. Tilak was not so enthusiastic but even he was among its discriminating supporters because it was a philanthropic, humanitarian institution, but he took care to satisfy himself that Indian girls were not compelled to attend Christian prayers and the education imparted to them was only secular. He soon discovered, however, that the condition was not being observed and the institution was functioning as a proselytising body. He brought this to the notice of Ranade and Bhandarkar and they recorded their protest against it. The Pandita explained that only four girls were learning the Christian scripture. Ranade and Agarkar did not seem to mind it. Tilak had apparently seen that the Sadan was primarily meant for carrying on proselytising activity and social and educational work among Indians was only a suitable cover.

Tilak was charged with questioning the altruistic motives of the missionaries and was even called enemy of women's education. Tilak hit back in his papers calling Ranade and Agarkar as reformers in haste and credulous though well-meaning men. But even the ardent social reformers at last found that it was no longer possible to stand by the Pandita against public resentment. Agarkar was convinced about her double dealing and one day he quietly removed his own niece from the school. The Shardasadan was itself removed to Kedgaon and is still conducting its proselytising-



cum-philanthropic activity. Ranade had to declare ultimately that he was backing a wrong horse and he severed his connection with it. He set afoot afterwards a movement to start another Shardashadan under unexceptionable Hindu auspices but the attempt did not succeed. But the fact remains that for many years Pandita Ramabai made a good companion for Ramabai Ranade, and but for her excessive missionary zeal, she would have served the cause of Indian women much better than she has done.

Ranade had so far lost three of his best colleagues and personal friends viz. Vishnushastri Pandit, Krishnashastri Chiploonkar and G. V. Joshi alias Sarvajani Kaka. Now came the turn of Prof. Kero Lakshman Chhatre, who was, after Balashastri Jambhekar, the most prominent mathematician. He was an enthusiastic collaborator of Ranade in his work of spreading education among women and gladly took classes for girls to teach them astronomical phenomena. Ramabai herself was one of his students and she has paid high tributes to his loving nature and parental patronage. Chhatre was really a patriarch of the old type who gave shelter to a number of students in his house and looked after all their needs. When he died, Ranade felt his loss keenly. Ranade wrote a lengthy obituary of Chhatre in the *Dnyanaprakash* entitled 'In Memorium' and its very first sentence is "A prince among men has fallen and the pride of Poona is laid low in the dust". He then reviewed his work as a professor and concluded by saying : "Great as his claims are upon the gratitude of the nation as a professor and scientist, these claims sink into nothing by the side of his greatness as a gentleman, representative of all that is best and noblest in our national character". A condolence meeting of the citizens of Poona was held and a memorial in the form of a new Hindu calendar was decided upon but this project does not appear to have made any progress.

It would seem that one after another Ranade's friends were leaving this world. Gopalrao Deshmukh and Waman Shivram Apte breathed their last in 1892. Rao Bahadur Nulkar and Yeshwantrao Kelkar followed in 1893. In September 1893, Telang died when he had just completed 40 years and within a fortnight, Narayan Mahadeo Parmanand who was referred to as a Rishi among Ranade's friends also left this world. Even before these men, Mahadeo Moreshwar Kunte had died in 1888. Kunte like the Kirtanes was a friend and colleague of Ranade from his



childhood in Kolhapur. He was Ranade's great support in organising Dayanand Swami's reception and propagating the Prarthana Samaj cult. Kunte was also his associate in collecting signatures to a pledge to prohibit child marriages. Ranade and Kunte together were looked upon as a terror to the Christian missionaries in those days. Kunte's book *Vicissitudes of Aryan Civilisation* is a lasting testimony to his learning.

Ranade was touring in Sholapur district when he received the order of appointment as High Court Judge. Two months ago Telang had died and no appointment was made to that post. All over India, suggestions were being made that Ranade should be appointed in his place. There was no question of his fitness but his connection with many public activities was the obstacle to his promotion. But this obstacle was overcome and his appointment was announced. Ranade, during his camp at Madha was busy delivering a course of lectures on Indian villages and the methods of their uplift. From there he went to Sholapur and gave another lecture on the rise of the United States of America. He was speaking for 90 minutes in the open exposed to cold breeze. This affected his health. While he was ill, the order of appointment came. When he was somewhat better he proceeded to Poona, but the people of Sholapur insisted on giving a public reception and a send-off. He had to go through it. After going to Poona he took good rest on medical advice. But after this the round of receptions and farewell functions began in Poona and it appeared that they would be endless. There was no public institution in Poona which did not arrange a function. At last Ranade decided to give the Poona people the slip. He quietly had two tickets purchased and stealthily left for the Poona railway station with his wife. But somehow or other people got scent of this and a number of people gathered at the station with garlands and bouquets. These were spontaneous expressions of the great regard in which he was held for his meritorious and varied services.

Since he had come to Poona in 1881 he set afoot a number of activities and institutions: the *Quarterly Journal* of the Sarvajanik Sabha, the Town Hall at Hirabaug, the Poona Native General Library, the Industrial Conference, the Industrial Exhibition, the Industrial Association, the Reay Museum, the Cotton and Silk Spinning and Weaving Company, the Metal Manufacturing Factory, the Fergusson College, the Female High School, the



Vernacular Translation Society, the Arbitration Court, the Sub-Judges Conference, the Poona Mercantile Bank, the Prarthana Samaj Mandir, the Elocution Encouragement Society, the Marathi Authors' Society, the Poona Spring Lectures, the Poona Dyeing Company, the Reay Paper Mill, etc. If he did not actually found all these institutions, he had a big hand in doing so. He liberally assisted by finding the expenses for buildings or helped them in other ways. He had got erected a *sabhamandap* in front of a temple at Sholapur, a *dharmashala* at Alandi and provided for drinking water facilities at the foot of the Parvati Hill. His house was always crowded with poor and needy students and others to whom he gave fees, money for books and free meals. On the occasion of leaving Poona, he set apart Rs. 25,000 and appointed trustees to administer this fund for the benefit of some societies. Poona was a favourite place of Ranade, although it was this place where he had to go through both popular and official persecution. Dr. Pollen used to call him 'the uncrowned King of Poona'. He himself was sorry that in Bombay where he was going as a Judge of the High Court his freedom for public work would be curtailed, particularly political work. He was accustomed to do a great deal from behind somebody and he never cared for the limelight and so he was reconciled to his new position.

## VIII

### RANADE'S JOURNAL

THE PREVIOUS chapter dealt with Ranade's official and private life in Poona during the 12 years he was there. Some matters of a semi-public importance were also touched upon. But during these 12 years this is not all that he did. In fact the more important matters with which he was vitally and prominently connected have been deliberately left untouched in that chapter for more convenient treatment in separate subsequent chapters. This chapter will deal with his work for the *Quarterly Journal* of the Sarvajanik Sabha. This was started, as mentioned before, in 1878. Since then, till he started the Deccan Sabha in 1897, Ranade was closely associated with it although its editors were, first, Sitaram Hari Chiploonkar and subsequently Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Indeed the *Quarterly* could well be called the Ranade Journal since most of the writings were his, though they were always anonymous. Other contributions necessarily bore the stamp of his way of thinking, such as those of Rao Bahadur Joshi and Gokhale. His mature thinking found expression on many a subject of political, social, educational, industrial and religious importance and although his views were necessarily expressed on topics that were then current, they have much in them that is of abiding value and therefore profitable reading even today.

India's agrarian problem has been discussed by him in its various aspects and facets from time to time. A very large majority of India's population being engaged in agriculture, most of them being small farmers or agricultural labourers, living a hand-to-mouth existence and all but strangled by chronic indebtedness, it is no wonder that they should have a place very near to his heart. He had moreover closely studied what famine and drought meant to them. So he contributed an article on the agrarian problem and its solution and another on the Deccan Agriculturists



Relief Bill in 1879. In 1880 he wrote on the law of land sale in British India. In 1881 he dealt with the critics of Sir William Wedderburn who held that there should be a permanent settlement of land revenue in the Deccan and discussed the Land Revenue and Tenancy Bills in the Central Provinces. Land law reforms and agricultural banks engaged his attention in the same year. In 1883 he explained the significance of the emancipation of the serfs in Russia, the forest conservancy in the Bombay Presidency, the Prussian land legislation and the Bengal Tenancy Bill. In 1884, he criticised the then proposed reforms in the resettlement of land assessment and protested and warned against the new departure in the land assessment policy in another article. In the same year he discussed the economic results of the Public Works policy. In 1890 he wrote on the Netherlands, India and the cultural system and in 1891 he wrote on the reorganisation of rural credit in India.

A study of these articles reveals that Ranade held some very strong views on India's land problem. His opinion was that there were immense possibilities in Indian agriculture and a contented and prosperous agricultural population could be reared on it but for lack of proper planning and organisation consciously aimed at its welfare, it had become a listless, withering pack of people who lived because they did not die. But he had remedies to rescue the peasantry from decay and desolation. After having made a very careful survey of the census of 1871 in his article, "Land Law Reforms and Agricultural Banks" he has drawn the following characteristic picture of the Deccan peasant: "We have thus a poor soil afflicted with scanty and irregular rains, inhabited by a sparse population, for the most part agricultural, and uneducated with no openings for labour except an exhausted soil, with average holdings of less than ten acres per head of the family, burdened with a State demand which represents one-third of their net gains, forced to be content with a hand-to-mouth subsistence represented by a maximum of Rs. 60 for a family and involved in heavy bonds of debt under circumstances beyond their control to a numerous mass of small creditors, largely foreign in their domicile and not prepared to take up cultivation on their own account. These are the salient features of the social and economic condition of the people which it is necessary to bear in mind while discussing the question of the best method of relief."

Having stated the problem in this way, Ranade proceeded to



study the causes of this condition of the agriculturists. He refused to take for granted the facile explanation that the distressing state of affairs was there "because the Indian Ryot is an improvident, spiritless and ignorant peasant, whose condition has been wretched all along and can never be improved". The commission which inquired into the condition of the Deccan peasantry after the Deccan riots, supported the position that he had taken. As Ranade pointed out thriftlessness and ignorance and lack of spirit were the results and not the causes of the sorry plight of the peasantry and he traced the causes to faulty social institutions and unsound economic arrangements. In his articles, "The Reorganisation of Rural Credit" and "The Emancipation of Serfs in Russia" he has shown by a comparative study of the condition of the peasant proprietors in France, Hungary, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and Egypt that with the removal of the causes the results were and can be altered. Ranade attributed India's agricultural ailments to three main causes. The first ailment in his opinion lay in the system of rural credit. A vast number of petty money-lenders followed the profession of money-lending under laws that afforded great facilities for extortion. The peasantry chronically struggled under a burden of debt carried from father to son or even from grandfather to grandson and paid interest at inhuman rates ranging from 25 to 75 per cent. Because the ryots needed money perpetually, the money-lenders were rendering a social service, in a sense, and in the absence of a better agency whether co-operative, joint stock or government, they became indispensable. The State had a rigid land revenue system whereby the ryot had to pay in cash fixed sums of money within a fixed date. This did not coincide with the time when the ryot had realised his produce and he had to borrow to pay Government dues. This situation was further aggravated when there was scarcity of famine. In practice, therefore, it was the money-lender who paid the land tax rather than the ryot who was constantly in debt. It was a wasteful, uneconomic and disheartening procedure.

The second ailment was that the ryot lacked capital for carrying out any improvements in his fields, for buying bullocks or implements or for doing anything worthwhile. In such a precarious and poor condition he lived his domestic and vocational life. Ranade says, "There is an utter paralysis of industry in rural India due to the poverty of the resources of the classes



engaged in the production of wealth". Government's land policy was the third and, in Ranade's opinion, the basic cause of the perilous condition of the ryot because the first two causes really arose out of it. The State's monopoly of land and its right to increase the assessment at its own discretion were, in Ranade's opinion, the root cause of the peasantry's troubles. Since the primary producer of food himself was in a miserable condition and unable to buy anything that could be regarded as a sign of his prosperity, the country also would not prosper materially. The natural result of the Government's claim to be the ultimate owner of all the land was that the assessment almost always was increased after every survey and the payment of land revenue became a crushing burden that killed all initiative and enterprise. In his article, 'Land Law Reforms and Agricultural Banks' he wrote, "The only guarantee against excessive enhancement which is found effective where land is held in private right is the competition of landlords among themselves. There is no place for this guarantee under the Indian system, because the land is the monopoly of the State, single and individual. The absence of such a check has resulted in wholesale enhancement all over the country to an extent of which the Government itself is now ashamed."

Ranade did not merely stop at probing the disease and stating its causes. He had also a prescription for its cure. His remedies were : juridical reform to help the ryot to avoid the evils of debt; banking and loan facilities to encourage the flow of capital into the agricultural industry ; reform of the land tenure system so as to do away with the uncertainty and burdensomeness of the perpetual revision settlements. Ranade found that many of his ideas with regard to juridical reform were embodied in the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act of 1879. The aim of this legislation was to remove the legal encumbrances that disheartened the ryots. This was sought to be done by empowering the law courts to go behind the actual debt agreements to see if there was manifest unfairness and to put it right by making it compulsory that every promissory note or other instrument to which a ryot was a party should be written by or under the supervision of the village registrar ; by extending the period of limitation of suits so that the creditor did not have to renew the bond or file a suit every three years; by giving wide scope to the principle of conciliation; by authorising village munsiffs to try suits of less than ten rupees ;



by disallowing compound interest ; by abolishing arrest and imprisonment for debt; by restricting the liability of land to be sold for unsecured money debts and by restricting the liability of heirs to pay ancestral debts.

For twelve years, from 1881 to 1893, Ranade as a special judge under the provisions of the Act was an administrator of its purposes. He saw that it was defective in some respects. He thought, for instance, that interfering with the obligation to pay ancestral debts was not very wise. He also feared that the ryots would find it difficult to borrow from money-lenders, while they must get money from somewhere and somehow or other, if the land revenue system remained as rigid as before. He always held that a relief measure like this must be accompanied by a more liberal land revenue policy and to that end he advocated permanent settlement of the same. Writing in 1881, he said, " We have for the last 15 years, in good report and evil report, exposed the failure of the present system and advocated a permanent settlement of land as the only alternative open to Government, by the side of which reform all other agencies sink into insignificance. The change required is to give the owners of land complete and independent proprietorship. Let each man's land be as much his absolute property as his house or clothes." He further said, " The elements of national prosperity are wanting in a country whose principal resource is agriculture and that agriculture is in the hands of a thriftless and poverty-stricken peasantry, who are weighted down with heavy charges and whose life and labours are not cheered by the charm and strength inspired by a sense of property." Ranade had to meet the claim that according to traditions going much behind British rule, the State in India has been the universal landlord and that land revenue was really rent and not a tax, but he always vigorously questioned that claim.

The kind of permanent settlement which Ranade wanted has been put by him in the form of a well-defined proposal in his article entitled ' Protest and Warning against the New Departure in the Land Assessment Policy ' in the following words : " Our own proposal is that the permanent assessment claimable from all soils should be once for all fixed at a proportion of the gross staple produce, the proportion being based on the principle of dividing the net profits half in kind and half between the Government and the private holder. This kind payment so fixed should



be unchangeable for all time, whatever improvement the private holder may effect in the land. As, however, the Government cannot conveniently receive the kind payment, its disbursements being all in cash, we should commute the kind payments into money values and those money values would be liable to periodical changes according as prices permanently rise or fall over a great part of the country." Government never adopted the policy he so vigorously urged and one reason behind Government's unwillingness to adopt it was the fear of loss of revenue if it let go its hold on the unearned increment of the land. Therefore, Ranade was always careful to point out that extension of the permanent settlement would so develop the resources of the country that both the earned and unearned increments would greatly increase and consequently the direct and indirect taxes would come in time to yield a greatly enhanced return.

According to Ranade, two great benefits would have resulted from such a permanent settlement. One was that private capital would have been attracted for investment in land and the other was that land would have come into the possession of such persons as would have made the most effective use of it. He said, in his article 'Land Law Reforms and Agricultural Banks' that "All improvements in husbandry suggested by science and experience presuppose a great expenditure of capital to be invested in the land. The magic of property can alone induce people to incur such expenditure. Neither private *sowcars* nor joint stock land banks will venture capital to sink wells or to use manures or throw dams across streams, unless the ryots to whom these advances are to be made possess full proprietary rights over the lands. If land banks have succeeded in other countries so well, most of the success must be undoubtedly laid to the credit of the fact that the peasants in those countries are not tenants of the State but own the lands they cultivate in absolute right." In his article 'The Agrarian Problem and its Solution' he said, "The thrifty ryot will maintain his place and extend his operations and rise to a better position, while the indifferent and lazy ryot will make way for better folk who will take his place to the great advantage of general interest. The change will not be sudden but a slow organic growth and the new order of things will develop the best interests of all classes without any shock to the vested interests."

Ranade's considered view was that Government's land policy



only led to the existence of a poverty-stricken peasantry in possession of the soil, but had no capital to put in the soil for its improvement. The money-lender often became practically the owner of the land on the strength of the loans given to the ryot remaining unreturned, but he did not wish or intend to work up the land himself. Ranade wrote, "The monied classes having at present no interest in the land, cannot occupy the position nor enjoy the status nor discharge the functions of landlords. The absence of such a class retards progress in all directions. The Presidency of Bengal enjoys this advantage over the rest of India and this circumstance alone accounts for its prosperous and progressive condition." Had his land policy proposals been adopted, he looked forward to a time, "when there will grow up all over the country a provident and thrifty class of landlords whose interests it will be to make the most of the resources of the soil and of the great public works constructed by the Government". Ranade's opinion was that the social and political advantages of such a change would have been even more important than its economic advantages. The only effect of Ranade's sustained and vigorous propaganda was that in 1884, Government decided to take steps to reform the assessment procedure by introducing an element of what may be called long duration settlements or semi-permanent settlements. The classifications of soils that had been made before were accepted as fixed for all time. No enhancement of tax was to be made on account of improvements made by the holder. Changes in assessment were to be made only on the basis of rise or fall in the general level of prices and benefit accruing from the construction of railways and similar public works like irrigation.

Better banking and loan facilities for the ryots was another aspect of the rural problem that engaged Ranade's attention seriously. In 1881, he pleaded that Government should encourage and even guarantee private effort wherever it was willing to undertake the loan business on terms that would leave a reasonable margin for the ryot. He had found out that capital was the one need of the agriculturist for land improvement and increased produce and the credit system that was in vogue was altogether demoralising and harmful in its effects. In a paper read at the first industrial conference held at Poona in 1891, he presented a comprehensive study of this subject. He pointed out what had been done in the continental countries whose conditions were comparable with those



obtaining in India and urged that as the measures taken in those countries had succeeded, similar measures taken here would be attended with good results. In the concluding part of this paper he said, "Our agricultural and artisan population are not wage-earners, (as in England). They own their lands and houses and implements of trade and their small shops and factories and their cattle and carts. They mostly work on their own account and if they have no store or savings of their own, as they generally have not, they must borrow money and repay it as they best can. The necessity of reorganising credit transactions is thus not confined to agricultural classes. It is a general necessity created in this country by its circumstances and habits and any measures which tend to rescue this business from its present chaos and restore certainty and honesty in it are sure to put new life and energy in the body politic.... The circumstances of India furnish strong grounds why the Government here should help this work of reorganising credit in all ways according as local difficulties or aptitudes may suggest or justify. An effort was made in this part of the country to start an agricultural bank. The scheme was well supported by the local Government and the Government of India also acting under the advice of Sir Edward Baring, now Lord Cromer. It was, however, negatived by the India Office authorities.... The promoters of the agricultural bank desired that Government should sanction the experiment in one taluka by undertaking an inquiry into the previous debts of agriculturalists which, when ascertained, were to be paid off by the Government, the bank undertaking to make good the sum so paid on condition of its being allowed the first charge on the mortgaged estates of the ryots so benefited. The bank undertook to charge very low rates of interest and to recover them in instalments fixed with the approval of Government offices. To prevent all disputes, it agreed to leave this work of collection of instalments due in the hands of the village authorities who were to realise the instalments as they now realise the assessment of Government or Tagavi advances."

This was precisely the scheme that Gokhale urged on the attention of the Government of Bombay in his speeches on the budget and the Land Alienation Bill during 1900-1901 as member of the Bombay Legislative Council. Because, like Ranade, he was convinced that "the difficulties of Indian life are too serious and peremptory to be satisfactorily disposed of in any other way." As

Ranade stated further in the paper under discussion, the then proposed agricultural bank had prayed that assessment in the area so dealt with, should not be raised so as to disturb the arrangements they might have entered into and that their transactions should be exempted from all taxes and charges. The Government was to help them to obtain speedy and cheap execution in consideration of its undertaking to finance and work the concern and charge low rates of interest. Ranade said, "None of the special privileges and concessions asked for were without their precedent in the Credit Fonciers and Land Mortgage Banks subsidised and helped and controlled by the European States. State help is needed for the very cogent reason that State control and supervision are necessary to inspire confidence. No other organisation in the country has such a diversified, intelligent and widely diffused agency at its disposal. The interests of the State also are materially involved in the matter of the well-being of the most numerous and the least helped classes of the tax-paying population."

Ranade pointed out that there was no need for Government to expend its funds ; the funds would be forthcoming to any extent if Government only promised to organise the agency and set it at work. The post office savings bank deposits were ready at hand. All that Government had to do was to organise District or City Committees of Indian capitalists, empower them to receive deposits at fixed rates and lend them at slightly higher rates to the borrowers on the security of lands or houses, the excess rate providing for a gradual amortisation of the debt in a definite period as also insurance charges and working expenses. The loans of these District Committees were to have priority over all other debts and were to be exempted from all duties and certain and speedy execution was to be permitted to them. Ranade's opinion was that the experience of the working of similar bodies in the Continental countries and Egypt justified the hope that the losses would be negligible and the benefits incalculable. What was true of agriculture was true of every other trade and industry in India. After arguing in this way he concluded his paper with the following hopeful note. He said, "The recuperative powers of Nature and Art are limited and cannot stand the deadweight of prohibitive rates of interest made necessary by disorganised credit and the uncertainties and delays and expenses of Civil proceedings. Remove these difficulties



and hindrances and credit will rise to its natural and healthy level. The glories of peace are far nobler than those of war. The whole country is looking up with wistful eyes for a statesman who will guide its destinies in this great struggle and help it to win the race of life and revived health and national well-being."

As early as in 1881, Ranade had taken the opportunity to say all this in his article relating to the emancipation of serfs in Russia which he contributed to the *Quarterly*. In the concluding part of this article he wrote, "It is urged that heroic remedies like the emancipation of serfs in Russia and the creation of peasant proprietors in France and Germany, can safely be undertaken by the State with public credit or funds, but that out here in India, the State, while claiming a monopoly of Landlord's rights must not incur any such responsibility, because the Indian ryot is an improvident, spiritless and ignorant peasant whose condition has been wretched all along and can never be improved. Our reply to this charge is that the French peasant was not always the abstemious and prudent citizen that he now is. There was a time when Arthur Young mourned over the condition of the agricultural classes of France. The magic of property and of free institutions have worked all this wonderful change. The degradation from which the Russian peasant has been freed by a national government can scarcely be said to be realised in the case of the Indian peasants. The Imperial Government there ventured in a spirit of statesmanship and philanthropy to redeem its serfs and make them free men regardless of cost. The power of the Sowkar and the State landlord in this country cannot be compared in the continuity and intensity of its abuse for one moment with the tyranny of the nobility of Russia. The depression, however, such as it is in this country, is real and becoming worse every day. Let the State interfere not merely with a minimum of piecemeal dose of judicial reform but by the wholesale dispensation of a large administrative relief. If it subsidises or guarantees private banks against risk during the first few experimental years and enables them to rid the peasantry of their ancestral debts and if at the same time it allows the land revenue to be redeemed or permanently settled at a moderate figure once for all, it will provide an ample fund for agricultural relief improvement without the necessity of borrowing a single rupee of fresh loans. The ryot once emancipated and set on his feet and inspired with a sense that the land is as absolutely



his as his home or clothes, there need never be any apprehension of his running into debts again and not practising thrift. The awakening of two hundred millions of the earth's most gifted race will be a triumph of beneficent government by the side of which the abolition of slavery in 1833 in England or the slave emancipation war in America in 1860 and the contemporaneous serf emancipation of Russia will be but child's play. It only needs a statesman to grasp the full height of this argument and to restore India to its proud position as the garden and granary of the world."

How again and again Ranade has reverted to his prescription for the solution of the agrarian problem is interesting and instructive to follow. The process brings home to the reader the firmness of his convictions. Thus writing in 1880 on 'The Law of Land Sale in British India', he said : "The only settlement of the (agrarian) problem that is possible is not to its (Government's) taste. It (Government) should withdraw from its position as landlord and look upon the land tax as a tax like any other monopoly taxes. A permanent ryotwari settlement fixed in grain which the land produced and commuted into money values every twenty or thirty years, can alone furnish a solution of this agricultural problem. If differences subsequently sprung up between class and class, as they have on occasions sprung up in Bengal, the Government can interfere as a mediator and right matters by protecting the weak against the strong. It will not, however, for fancied political considerations, accept this position or allow middlemen to come between itself and its pauper tenants and its attempts to undo the legitimate influence of the saving classes can only end in a great disaster. The Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act can hardly bring any permanent relief, while the standing cause of all the embarrassments of the ryots continues at work with untempered rigidity. It is hoped that the new regime (Ripon's and Reay's) from which all hope so much will turn its attention to this aspect of the question and devise a remedy which will establish an accord between the economic, social and intellectual conditions of the population and secure the real advancement of the country on a permanent foundation."

Ranade has thus seized every occasion to press what he considered were proper remedies to solve the agrarian problem in India. He has devoted some thought to certain other requisites also for securing all round agricultural prosperity. Revival of



industries and the diversion of some of the surplus labour from the land, spread of education well beyond the mere acquaintance with the three Rs, diminution of taxes and the extravagant cost of Government, foresight in forest conservancy, especially averting the harm done to agriculture by indiscriminate cutting of forests on the hills and mountains and the river banks, were some of the points to which he alluded from time to time in his writings and speeches. He was alive to and aware of all aspects of the agrarian problem and Gokhale who was thrown into his constant company from 1887 till 1893, absorbed all his ideas and developed them and expounded them as new opportunities arose.

Rulers of Indian States and their people attracted the attention of the Sarvajanic Sabha from time to time. The case of Mulharrao Gaekwad has previously been dealt with. The Sabha continued to take the same interest in the administration of other Indian States. The *Quarterly Journal* published the addresses presented to the Maharajas of Baroda, Kolhapur, Mysore and others on various festive occasions. In addition to the congratulations, the addresses did not fail to offer salutary advice in respectful but straightforward language on the duties and responsibilities of the princes and their methods of Government. When Sayajirao Gaekwad came of age and assumed powers of rulership, the Sarvajanic Sabha openly made a few suggestions regarding the form which the Baroda administration should assume under the new ruler. It is needless to say that all this was done by Ranade. He had published in 1880 in the journal of the Sabha a model constitution for Indian States in which some of those suggestions were already incorporated for all princes to consider and adopt.

At the very beginning of this article he pointed out that the British Government often made great efforts to train the future ruler in those qualifications and accomplishments which the English guardians of the princes considered necessary. But most of them were of a superficial character like proficiency in English and some other European languages, aping Western manners of dress, behaviour and games. He had no objection to this kind of leavening or refining. But he emphasised that, "No amount of mere personal accomplishment in the young rulers will cure the defects of the system of absolute rule which prevails everywhere and the temptations of which prove in too many cases so overpowering as to wash

off the varnish of education in a few years and leave the state none the better, often much worse, for the care taken of its Chief during the minority. Our own impression is that, as much, if not more care should be bestowed upon the training of the State and the people in the arts and habits of expecting and securing responsible rule and well-ordered power as is now lavished upon the Princes and in teaching them good manners." To the objection that a paper constitution would be useless because the Indian people did not manifest the power, habits and public feeling which alone can awe a mischievously inclined ruler and stop him in the race of vice and cruel exactions, Ranade replied by saying that, "This function of the people could be discharged by the British authority whose representative already wields great powers and has generally the good sense requisite to make him a useful control and this fear will be efficient as a sanction till the more genuine home growth of native public opinion learns to respect itself and enforce obedience".

Ranade wanted that there should be a constitution for every State and the princely ruler should pledge himself to respect it. "Any grievous or long continued departure from the pledge, should, upon the representation of the subjects, be visited, after warning by the Viceroy and local Governors representing the Paramount power, with the penalty of deprivation under circumstances under which in a free state, public opinion would have sanctioned and enforced deposition." The constitution outlined by him bears the stamp of clear thinking and thorough treatment. The principles that he wanted to be embodied in every Indian State constitution were: (1) Each of the greater Chiefs should be required to nominate a responsible minister, the nomination to be approved by the representative of the British Power and the person appointed to be irremovable except for clearly proved incapacity, disloyalty, crime, misdemeanour proved to the satisfaction of both the chief and the British Agent. The present subservient race of men of straw and no position who rise to be ministers by pandering to their prince's worst tastes and vices and by standing well with the Political Agent by anticipating his whims, must give way to a better class of people. The Chief, the minister and the Political Agent would be the three corner-stones of the constitution. (2) The Chief would only exercise power by way of regular appeal from the order of his minister. There would be no interference with the delegated power of the minister



until his order was passed and any of the parties affected by it appealed to the Chief. At present the minister is either all-powerful and virtually supersedes the prince or he is only a Secretary, affixing his signature to the dictates of unacknowledged ministers in the background who govern the prince. (3) There should be a Council or *Durbar* consisting of the heads of the different departments and a few selected representatives of the non-official classes, the Chief being President of the Council and the minister its active leader. This Council should be the final authority. Without its sanction, no new tax or new law or great innovation on existing forms should be made. (4) As "the uncertainty of the King's rights in lands, the greed of power and the temptations to abuse it, have been the principal sources of misrule and anarchy which have ruined the native states, both large and small" Ranade wanted to make it a condition of succeeding to independent rule that the prince should agree to the settling of the land revenue permanently or for long terms on moderate and fixed principles and to the lightening of all burdens. (5) There should be separation between the State's public and private expenditure and the civil list once settled should not be increased except for good cause and with the consent of the Council and the minister. There should be a clear division of executive and judicial duties and of civil and military duties. Offices should be bestowed on subjects of the State who are of good family and who have qualified themselves by passing prescribed examinations. The laws of the State should be written. There should be an annual statement of accounts. Local Government should be freely fostered under proper control. Such were his ideas of improving the administration in Indian States.

The appointment of the Hunter Commission on education in 1882 provided Ranade an opportunity to record his well-thought out views on primary and higher education and Government's duty in that respect. Two lengthy papers were contributed by him to the journal of the Sarvajanic Sabha in 1882. Discussing higher education and its claims to State support he said there was unfortunately an impression abroad that the object of the Government of India in appointing an Education Commission was to transfer the moderate funds, at present devoted to higher education, to the further support of primary education and to leave higher education to take care of itself. Ranade was opposed to such a step because he felt that such action would make for stopping the progress



of the country. This plea in favour of higher education being left to take care of itself was put forward by Christian missionary bodies on the ground that it was Government's duty "to extend the benefits of education to those classes of the Community who are utterly incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts" or in the words of Sir Charles Wood, the author of the educational despatch of 1854, "that the resources of the State should be so applied as to assist those who cannot be expected to help themselves and that the richer classes of the people should gradually be induced to provide for their own education." Ranade argued that the time was not then ripe for any such step being taken.

With the support of the facts and figures taken from the reports of the Education Department of the Bombay Presidency, Ranade showed that the time had not come for Government to make over the charge of higher education into the hands of local, private or missionary agencies. He also emphatically expressed himself against the missionary societies alone being made responsible for higher education. He wrote, "Under no conceivable circumstances can the education of a great nation like the Hindus be solely or chiefly entrusted to persons who have come to this country to destroy the national faiths and to convert the nation to Christianity and whose work is supported by the charitable contributions of pious people from foreign countries. Such a dereliction of the State's chief duty is opposed to all modern conceptions and to the solemn pledges of Parliament and Royal proclamations and the spirit of the despatch of 1854. The proposal is, in short, so strange and so inappropriate in the case of a country which yields to the State a yearly revenue of some 65 million sterling that it cannot be seriously entertained. The Hindus are not like the savages of the Sandwich and Society Islands, without a religion of their own and so easily liable to be converted *en masse* to a nominal Christianity." Ranade clearly opined that in the then prevailing social and economic conditions of India, it was as much the duty of the Government to help the middle classes to obtain higher education as to assist the lower to secure primary education. In fact he thought that even if private and local agencies came forward to run secondary and University education, it was the Government's duty to run certain model High Schools and Colleges to set standards which must be kept or approached by private



educational efforts and so he was not very favourably inclined towards Lord Reay's proposal to hand over the Deccan College to the Deccan Educational Society.

Discussing primary education *vis-a-vis* the Hunter Commission on Education Ranade said that the practical question to be faced was : How with the existing resources, public and private, we can so distribute the funds at our disposal as to secure the extension and improvement of primary schools without unduly prejudicing the interests of higher education. Ranade was always in favour of decentralisation of power and authority and wanted only a minimum of centralised official control. The opening paragraph of this article is typical of Ranade's readiness to adjust himself to the practical needs of the hour. He said, "It is time that we should pass in review the various systems of elementary education which have been in operation in different parts of British India during the last 25 years and by contrasting their results furnish the ground-work of fact on which the authorities, more directly concerned with the practical working of this department, may be expected to proceed in its future reorganisation consequent on the labours of the Education Commission—the main object of whose inquiry is to ascertain the present State of elementary education throughout the Empire and the means by which this can everywhere be extended and improved."

As usual Ranade's approach was thorough going and his treatment exhaustive. It would seem as if he was studying the subject and making proposals like one who was a policymaker of the Education Department. While making his speeches on the resolution and the Bill respecting primary education in 1911 and 1912, Gokhale followed the Ranade model closely, knowing all the while that his effort was not going to meet with success. But the devotion to duty and the capacity to take maximum pains for the work in hand characterised both master and disciple in the same manner. Ranade said, "A Government which can afford to spend 20 crores on a useless frontier war and deems it just to maintain a garrison at the cost of half the net revenue and has to remit for Home Charges the other half, cannot fairly plead its inability to supplement the existing grant for education so as to raise it to its old proportion under the Company's rule. The whole question of primary education is one of ways and means rather than of policy and we cannot but regret that by its assumptions and



limitations, Government has to a great extent given a wrong direction to the labours of the Commission and forced upon it discussion of side-issues which will only serve to thwart their deliberations upon the main problem."

After this plain speaking Ranade proceeded to observe that in practical life it was of no use to regret what was past and irrevocable and therefore accept under protest the limitations which the Government had been pleased to fix on its resources in regard to spread of education. His complaint was that while everywhere else in India the most strenuous efforts had been made to secure the co-operation of the people to promote education by taking full advantage of the indigenous systems, the ruling principle with the Government of Bombay had been to cry down the indigenous systems and to insist upon the claim of the Education Department to have an exclusive monopoly of primary education throughout the Presidency. The result was that Bombay stood alone in having the largest number of Government primary schools and the smallest number of primary aided schools. Ranade then went on to put forth a strong plea on behalf of the indigenous schoolmaster and defended him against the stock charges of ignorance, laziness, lack of discipline, employment of wrong methods and suggested that the authorities gave too much importance to a crammed book knowledge of the elements of grammar, geography and history while other subjects which were of greater importance in practical life were not attended to. He also pointed out that the agricultural community which formed the backbone of the population had to be reached with the gift of elementary education. But he pointed out that, "They require to be better fed and clothed and housed before they can be asked to educate themselves with advantage! A knowledge of the rudiments of reading and writing sufficient for their daily life is all that can be expected at present and this knowledge the indigenous system of schools provides satisfactorily and cheaply. A few picked boys might be helped by free scholarships to pass through the higher grades of instruction, but for the majority the simplest rudiments will suffice for many generations to come."

According to his calculation, based on the number of towns and villages in the Presidency, 14,000 more schools were required in Bombay (which in those days included Sind) which required 14 lakhs of rupees if they were to be provided on the Education Department's



pattern. But on the system that he proposed, he declared that a school could be provided for every village with a population over 200 at an annual cost of Rs. 4 lakhs only. His plan was to incorporate the then existing indigenous schools by extending a small capitation grant for every boy in regular attendance and an additional grant on the payment-by-results system for every boy whom these schools would send up for the free scholarship examinations. He would also encourage the establishment of more private schools either by the class from which the indigenous schoolmasters came or from certified teachers who would be licensed to open schools on their own account and make their own arrangements for receiving payment in kind or cash ranging from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 a month from the villagers according to the numbers attending the schools and its results at the free scholarship examinations. He felt confident that hundreds of trained and qualified young men would come forward to devote themselves to the task of spreading elementary education, if his plan was approved and implemented. This rather long article by Ranade in the *Quarterly* has no bearing whatsoever on the conditions obtaining today, but it is a model of how a project can be conceived, formulated and argued on the foundation of facts.

The *Quarterly Journal* published in 1894-1895 his discourse on 'Why Graduates Die Young' given at the Graduates' Association on April 15, 1894. Reference has already been made to this in Chapter II. This arose out of his anxiety to find out the correctness of some of the observations Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar had made in his convocation address as Vice-Chancellor in that year. Ranade felt "no useful purpose is served by imperfect generalisations not based on a wide survey of facts", and so he collected facts and figures. He suggested remedies for fighting early mortality among graduates on the strength of these figures and maintained that "it might be reasonably urged that the statistical method is not adapted to such an inquiry. Though the conclusions based on statistics are not absolutely to be trusted, their comparative value cannot be denied." The *Quarterly Journal* also published his two speeches in the July and October issues in 1895 in regard to reform of university examinations in which he had pleaded in favour of subject-wise passing if the percentage was 45 and only two examinations after the Matriculation for securing a degree.

The *Quarterly Journal* is full of material on other subjects also

like local self-government, administrative reform, political reform and social reform, but it will be more suitable to deal with all that in separate chapters.



## IX

### PROTAGONIST OF SOCIAL REFORM

IT IS with the cause of social reform that Ranade is associated most in the public mind, though his contribution to thought and action in the fields of economic, industrial, educational, religious and political reform is no less conspicuous. There is no need to go far to ascertain what this is due to. In other fields of reform, Ranade could easily take with him all those who gave some thought to these matters, but in the field of social reform, he had to encounter much opposition from the orthodox sections of society, particularly the Hindus. He was not given to offend or attack anybody but this did not prevent others from attacking him. Ranade, in his turn, had to defend himself. As a consequence, controversies ensued, which were sometimes very acute and vehement. These controversies are perhaps still lingering in the public mind and that is why Ranade is remembered more as a protagonist of social reform than in any other capacity.

Public memory is mainly confined to only a few among the items of social reform which then held the field such as women's education, widow marriages, raising the age of consent and consummation of marriage, lifting ban on foreign travel etc. At present these appear to be very simple and obvious matters and members of the present generation wonder why any controversies raged at all around them. But in Ranade's day they caused much strife and led to close friendships being estranged. Ranade was obliged to deal with all these questions because they were current in his day, but this does not mean that his vision was so circumscribed. His vision of social reform was so comprehensive as to include all aspects of human progress. Indeed, he was of the opinion that unless social reform was achieved in that sense, unless the individual was renovated and raised there could be no real economic or political progress. While describing him as a social reformer and

also stating that that was the greatest aim he set before himself, it is necessary to understand his position and its implications well. This position was succinctly stated by him when he said, "The change which we should all seek is thus a change from constraint to freedom, from credulity to faith, from status to contract, from authority to reason, from unorganised to organised life, from bigotry to toleration, from blind fatalism to a sense of human dignity. This is what I understand by human evolution, both for individuals and societies in this country."

Ranade's patriotism was so loftily conceived and well-thought out and his ideas about his countrymen's progress were so high-placed that he considered the idea of mere political or economic freedom as quite narrow. His faith in the potential capacities of his countrymen was so great that he sincerely believed that India had the ability and the potentiality to be the master of world humanity by reason of her great achievements in the past. That is why he once solemnly declared, "I profess implicit faith in two articles of my creed. This country of ours is the true land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race!" As Gokhale once observed no man cherished more lovingly and reverently India's past than Ranade did and as he said, "We could not break with the past, if we would. We must not break with it, if we could." But he was not content merely to sing the panegyrics of that past. To him its relation with the present and the future was more significant. While there was nothing wrong in seeking inspiration from the past to sustain self-confidence, our reverence for the past must not blind us to the present deficiencies in our character — that was his insistence. We must so improve ourselves in every way as to be deserving descendants of our illustrious ancestors and leave for the future an even richer heritage — that was his robust optimism and lofty idealism.

To this end he devoted all his energies. His was a fully dedicated life. He realised his mission quite early in life and planned it in accord with it. He was determined to strain every nerve to bring about all-sided reform of his fellowmen and his thoughts were always concentrated on some activity or other calculated to promote this one aim. His thoughts and activities were so varied and so versatile as to make it inevitable for different people to form different impressions about him in the light of their experience as regards his main interests in life. But his interest really was only one and



that was all-sided reform of man, renovation of the whole man, so as to bring the heaven of poetic imagination or the golden era of mythological description on earth. That is why Rao Bahadur G. V. Joshi said about him : “Ranade was no doubt a most zealous and devout patriot; he loved India with an intense and passionate love and laboured all his life for her welfare. But to my thinking, he was much more than a mere patriot or a nationalist. His sympathies and views were much broader and he followed a higher ideal. He was one of the most religious of men and what most struck and impressed me during my association with him was his simple, exalted and fervent piety. He always seemed to feel that he was in the presence of the Almighty, a humble servant doing his appointed task as best he could and with the light of faith that was vouchsafed to him.”

As a younger person Gokhale's experience is couched in even more reverential terms. Gokhale said of Ranade once: “It is no exaggeration to say that younger men who came in personal contact with him felt as in a holy presence, not only uttering ‘nothing base’ but afraid of even thinking unworthy thoughts while in his company”. On another occasion he said : “He (Ranade) was one of those men who appear from time to time in different countries and on different occasions to serve as a light to guide the footsteps of erring humanity.” It is necessary to realise and appreciate the essentially moral and human urge of Ranade's life-long conduct in order to understand his lofty idealism regarding India and Indians and the reform of Indian society as the basic source of all his movements and activities. Adaptation to new conditions of life and renunciation of old practices, revision of many traditional ways and time-honoured conventions were considered by Ranade as of immediate importance in order to bring about healthy progress. He was neither a revolutionary nor a revivalist, but an evolutionist. He strongly refuted the claims of the cult of revivalism in one of his addresses to the Social Conference. The following extract is an instance of his rather rare, vehement eloquence.

Ranade said : “When we are asked to revive old institutions, people are very vague as to the time that they have in view. What shall we revive? Shall we revive the old habits of our people when the most sacred of our caste indulged in all the abominations as we now understand them, of animal food and drink which exhausted every section of our country's zoology and botany? The men and

gods of those days ate and drank forbidden things to excess in a way no revivalist now will venture to recommend. Shall we revive the twelve forms of sons or eight forms of marriage which included capture and recognised mixed and illegitimate intercourse? Shall we revive the *Niyoga* system of procreating sons on our brothers' wives when widowed? Shall we revive the old liberties taken by the *rishis* and their wives with the marital tie? Shall we revive the hecatomb of animals from year's end to year's end and in which human beings were not spared as propitiatory offerings? Shall we revive the *shakti* worship of the left hand with its indecencies and practical debaucheries? Shall we revive the *sati* and infanticide customs or the flinging of living men into the rivers or over rocks or hook-swinging or the crushing beneath Jagannath's Car? Shall we revive the internecine wars of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas or the cruel persecution and degradation of the aboriginal population? Shall we revive the custom of many husbands to one wife or many wives to one husband? Shall we require our Brahmins to cease to be landlords and gentlemen and turn into beggars and dependants upon the King as in olden days? ... In a living organisation as society is, no revival is possible. The dead and the buried or burnt are dead, buried and burnt once for all and the dead past cannot, therefore, be revived except by a reformation of the old materials into new organised beings. If revival is impossible reformation is the only alternative open to sensible people."

He was equally opposed to the cult of revolution, i.e. root and branch transformation which in fact was only blind imitation without reference to the conditions that inevitably limit the movements and efforts of every human being and every society. In his opinion lasting progress was possible only by engrafting new ideas on as much of the old life as was found suitable and healthy. The main objective of social reform, must be to broaden the sphere of free thought and action of an individual human being so as to help him think and act for himself, consistently with loyalty to his conscience. That is why he said : "To say that it is possible to build up a new fabric on new lines without any help from the past is to say that I am self-born and my father and grandfather need not have troubled for me." Yet he emphasised that, "The work of liberation must be the work of our own hands, each one working of himself for his own release". The fundamental ideas



of our social system, according to Ranade, to which most of our social evils were traceable were isolation, submission to outward force or power more than the voice of the inward conscience, perception of fictitious differences between man and man due to heredity and birth, a passive acquiescence in evil or wrong-doing and a general indifference to secular well-being almost bordering on fatalism. These have been, he said, the root ideas of our ancient social system. They have, as their natural result, led to the existing family arrangements where the woman is entirely subordinated to the man and the lower castes to the higher castes, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect for humanity.

Ranade gave expression to these and similar thoughts from year to year in his addresses at the National Social Conference from 1887 to 1901. The quotation in the paragraph above is from his address in 1900 to the Bombay Provincial Social Conference at Satara. There is inevitable repetition of ideas and suggestions made to social reformers in these addresses but a perusal of all of them shows what care he used to bestow in preparing them, how many reports he called from various centres in India and studied them and how he always struck a note of optimism on the basis of all this material. He never despaired or felt depressed or disheartened. Indeed he turned even hostile demonstrations to derive useful lessons therefrom as could be seen from his concluding address to the Poona Social Conference in 1895, when for the first time and the last time the National Social Conference was not held in the National Congress pandal.

The platform of the National Social Conference was his favourite place to say all that he wanted to convey to his countrymen in the cause of social reform. His yearly addresses from that pulpit constitute a mine of gems that his thoughts were. The conference platform was the central place to which individuals and representatives of institutions doing social reform work gathered together from year to year. Generally, the Social Conference Session followed that of the Indian National Congress and many Congress delegates were delegates of the Social Conference as well. About his Conference addresses Prof. James Kellock has given the following description : " Reading the Conference addresses one feels as if one were watching an able general directing a campaign. We see him keeping his eye always on the ultimate goal and judging every apparent success or failure in relation to

that goal. We see him pressing his forces onwards and yet taking care that impatience and over-enthusiasm do not carry the line too far forward. We see him keeping up the morale of his army by infusing into it his robust and reasoned optimism. He held that reform of the individual or society could not be piecemeal ; it was all one and indivisible." He gave expression to this opinion in the most striking manner, perhaps, in his address to the first Bombay Provincial Social Conference held at Satara. He not only encouraged provincial but also district Social Conferences. At Satara he said : " Whether in the political or social or religious or commercial or manufacturing or aesthetical spheres, in literature, in science, in art, in war, in peace, it is the individual and collective man who has to develop his powers by his own exertions in conquering the difficulties in his way. If he is down for the time, he has to get up with the whole of his strength, physical, moral and intellectual and you may as well suppose that he can develop one of those elements of strength and neglect the others as try to separate light from the heat of the sun or the beauty and fragrance from the rose. You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economic system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideals are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economic or political spheres. This interdependence is not an accident but is the law of our nature. Like the members of our body, you cannot have strength in the hands and the feet if your internal organs are in disorder ; what applies to the human body holds good of the collective humanity we call the society or state. It is a mistaken view which divorces considerations political from social and economic and no man can be said to realise his duty in one aspect who neglects his duties in the other directions."

Ranade has devoted a good deal of thought as to the *modus operandi* of bringing about social reform. He was never in favour of violent overthrow of all authority, whether human or heavenly. The supreme authority according to him was ' The Voice of God within us ' which seems to claim kinship with Mahatma Gandhi's ' inner voice '. Ranade said : " Revere all human authority. Pay your respects to all prophets and all revelations but never let this reverence and respect come in the way of the dictates of conscience,



the Divine Command in us." Again and again he stressed the point that the victory for social reform will come not by mere modifications of social institutions in a formal way under duress but by changing the hearts of individuals. That is why he said: "Reforms in the matter of infant marriages and enforced widowhood, in the matter of temperance and purity, intermarriage between castes, the elevation of the low castes, the readmission of converts and the regulations of our endowments and charities are reforms only so far and no further as they check the influence of the old ideas and promote the growth of the new tendencies."

While discussing the ways of social reform Ranade in his address at the Hislop College in Nagpur in 1891 pointed out that there were four methods. The first method was the method of tradition; that is to say, the method of basing reform on the old texts. He ascribed this method to Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar and Dayananda Saraswati who believed that in dealing with the masses, it would not do to follow any other method than that of taking the old texts and putting new interpretations on them so as to make them feel that there was an effort made to preserve the old continuity and that there was no attempt at innovation which in the eyes of the ignorant always meant revolution. The Social Conference followed this method in connection with the widow marriage agitation. The second method was that of appealing to the conscience of the people. This method sought to bind men by their own pledges or promises. The third method was to enforce reform by means of penalties, imposed either by caste organisations or the State, in either of which case it was equally a constraint imposed by the wise upon the ignorant in their common interest. Ranade said since this was coercion it had to be resorted to only where the first two methods viz. tradition and conscience failed. The fourth method might be called the method of rebellion which Ranade did not favour at all, because it broke continuity and only increased division in society. Ranade made it clear that the Social Conference did not believe in mere legislation as a means of bringing about social reform, but legislation was not ruled out in his scheme. Untouchability, *Sati*, infanticide, suicide, etc. in the name of religious tradition had to be abolished with a stroke — single and final. He held the same view in regard to raising the age of consent, because this reform was only an act of humanity.

Ranade conceded that opposition to a foreign Government legislating for us was not a bad sign. It was assertion of self-respect but when "the initiation is to be our own and based chiefly upon the example of our venerable past and dictated by the sense of the most representative and enlightened men in the community and all that is sought at the hands of the foreigners is to give to this responsible sense as embodied in the practices and usages of the respectable classes the force and the sanction of law" he saw no harm whatsoever in it.

There was prolonged agitation and acute discussion in which most of the celebrities of Ranade's day joined while the controversy over the Age of Consent Bill lasted. It began with the publication in 1884 by Byramji Malbari, a Parsee journalist, poet and philanthropist, of two tracts on child marriage and compulsory widowhood. They were circulated among all the officials and also among the leading men in every community in India. Ranade is said to have helped Malabari in putting into shape these leaflets and he was also committed, it would appear, to support him in his crusade. Whether this was so or not, Ranade stood by him loyally during the controversy which ended in 1891 with the passage of the legislation in that behalf. The proposed legislation was amendment of the Exception to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code which deals with rape, which is an offence under that section and is punishable according to the next section 376, with transportation for life or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years and also fine. The exception said that sexual intercourse by a man with his wife was not rape if she was ten years of age. The amendment proposed was that the figure ten should be raised to twelve. Ranade adhered to the view that this reform should be secured by legislation, though sponsored by a foreign Government. His view on the reforms advocated by Malabari was as quoted in the *Status of Women in India* by Dayaram Gidumal : "After making all allowances it cannot be denied that Hindu Society contrasts very unfavourably with all other civilised races in both the points noticed so prominently by Mr. Malabari. It is also not denied that early marriage leads to early consummation and thence to the physical deterioration of the race, that it sits as a heavy weight on our rising generation, enchains their aspirations, denies them the romance and freedom of youth, cools their love of study, checks enterprise, and generally



dwarfs their growth and fills the country with pauperism, bred of overpopulation with weaklings and sickly people and lastly that it leads in many cases to all the horrors of early widowhood."

Government invited the opinions of leading public men of India on Malabari's proposals. Among them were naturally Ranade and other eminent men of the day like Rao Saheb V. N. Mandlik, Justice K. T. Telang, Sir Ramesh Chunder Dutt and many others. Ranade in his personal memorandum sent to Government said that in the absence of self-regulating power in Hindu Society "the only way to secure the emancipation of the Hindu community from this bondage of past ideas is to withdraw one by one these fetters of so called religious injunctions and turn them into civil restraints". He proposed State action as follows : (1) That minimum marriageable age-limits both for boys and girls should be fixed by law, not compulsory in the sense of annulling marriages contracted before attaining the said limits, but only permissive in the sense of leaving the parties concerned freedom to question the binding character of the marriage so contracted — the age limit to be 16 to 18 for boys and 10 to 12 for girls, subject to exceptions in particular castes and localities. (2) That Municipal and Local Boards should be empowered to certify ages and that the parties concerned should be required to obtain licences from these Boards before marriages were solemnised. (3) That the Universities should, after a reasonable notice, confine their honours and distinctions to those who in addition to their other qualifications submit to the condition of remaining single during their College and School courses. (4) That the Penal Code be amended so far as to declare sexual intercourse with a girl under 14 to be rape. (5) That men of 45 and upwards should be prohibited by law from marrying young virgins ; so also the marriage of young men with girls older than themselves should be prohibited as being unnatural and mischievous. (6) That a second marriage during the life-time of the first wife should be allowed only if there be in the first wife one of the defects in view of which the Hindu religious books sanctioned such a marriage. These defects were quarrelsomeness, addiction to such vices as drink or opium or adultery, existence of a contagious disease, barrenness or giving birth only to female children.

Ranade, in this way, shaped Malabari's original suggestions, so as to make them acceptable and practicable. As Malabari had made them, they were quite drastic and some of them impracticable.



Telang and Mandlik frankly informed Malabari and the Government to that effect. Public meetings were held in many places, the most prominent of which was the one held in Bombay over which Rao Saheb Mandlik presided. This was on September 6, 1885. The Gujarati community was predominantly represented in this meeting, and so Mandlik made his speech in Gujarati. A letter was received by the President from Poona which was signed by about 40 Poona notables among whom were Sardars Raste, Vinchurkar and Purandare, Krishna Shastri Rajwade, Narayan Shastri Golbole and English-educated men like Messrs. M. M. Kunte, S. H. Chiplunkar, B. G. Tilak and others. The meeting was held for the purpose of only considering whether or not the proposed change in Section 375 of the Penal Code was necessary and expedient, it having been agreed that some of the reforms proposed by Malabari were quite desirable. A petition was prepared beforehand and it was urged in it that Government should not interfere in the matter under discussion and leave the people themselves to bring about the reform voluntarily. Rao Saheb Krishnalal Sukhram Mehta proposed the adoption of the petition and Mr. Daji Abaji Khare seconded it. Mr. Ishwarlal Dave further supported it. Justice Telang also declared that no legislation was necessary for bringing about the reform in question but suggested the addition of a few words to the petition. They were to the effect that the Hindu community was aware of the defects in their socio-religious usages and they must be removed, but Government need not take the initiative in the matter by legislation. Mr. Gokuldas Parekh supported this suggestion and a number of persons were in favour of it. Among them were Rao Bahadur Gopalrao Deshmukh, Messrs. N. G. Chandavarkar, Vaman Abaji Modak, Shamrao Vitthal, Shantaram Narayan and others. On a poll being taken it was found that 47 people were in favour of Telang's suggestion and an overwhelming majority was in favour of keeping the draft as it was.

Similar meetings were held in other places and provinces and Government came to the conclusion that public opinion all over India was against the proposed amendment of the Indian Penal Code. Government resolved, therefore, in 1886 to drop the proposal. During the course of the resolution Government said : " When caste or custom lays down a rule, which is by its nature enforceable in the Civil courts, but is clearly opposed to morality or public



policy, the State will decline to enforce it. When caste or custom lays down a rule which deals with such matters as are usually left to the option of citizens and which does need the aid of civil or criminal courts for its enforcement, State interference is not considered either desirable or expedient. In the competition of influence between legislation on the one hand and the caste or custom on the other, the condition of success on the part of the former is that the legislature should keep within its natural boundaries and should not by overstepping those boundaries, place itself in direct antagonism to social opinion."

Although Government thus washed its hands off the whole affair, Malabari refused to accept defeat. A couple of years later he went to England for medical treatment and there circulated his pamphlets among members of Parliament and other prominent persons. He also managed to have a public meeting held in London at the house of Lady Juley, with Lord Reay in the chair, and enlisted the sympathy and support of Her Majesty Queen Victoria and her consort for his cause. The meeting in London had passed four resolutions and urged them on the attention of the Government of India. The first resolution asked for the age of consent to be raised to 12. The second asked for provision to be made for enabling infant marriages to be set aside unless ratified by consent within a reasonable time of the proper age. The third resolution referred to the question of restitution of conjugal rights even when one of the parties to a marriage is unwilling to adopt such a course. This presumably arose out of the *Dadaji vs. Rukhmabai* case in which the High Court of Bombay had upheld the right of the husband to compel his wife to live with him when she came of age. Ranade, Modak and Agarkar criticised this ruling as violation of an ordinary civil liberty, while Telang, Kirtikar, Tilak, Apte and Setalvad approved of the court's verdict as right. This was in the year 1887. The fourth resolution demanded that whatever obstacles there were in the way of remarriages of widows should be removed.

This agitation in England had the desired effect on the Government of India. The decision to amend the Penal Code so as to raise the age of consent to 12 was taken and an amending bill to that effect was moved in the Imperial Legislative Council by Sir Andrew Scobal on January 9, 1890 and passed in a few weeks by a majority vote. Among the Indian members Sir Ramesh Chander

Dutt opposed it but Rao Bahadur Nulkar supported it. It may be said that he represented the Ranade-Modak-Bhandarkar line of approach in the Imperial Council. The British and official members of the Council accepted the arguments that Dr. Bhandarkar had advanced in support of the Bill on the strength of Sanskrit texts and Sir Andrew Scobal said in so many words that had he been a Hindu he would have preferred to be in the wrong with Dr. Bhandarkar and Sir T. Raghunath Rao than in the right with Pandit Shashadhar and Mr. B. G. Tilak. The bill was passed but it remained more or less a dead letter for scarcely any cases came before court seeking redress under the amended section. Government thereafter did not attempt any such legislation until the element of responsibility was introduced in the Indian Constitution and there were duly elected members of the legislature. This was perhaps the most hotly conducted controversy in the social reform movement in India which lasted from 1884 to 1891 and to which everybody who was somebody in Indian public life contributed his mite to keep it raging. The most prominent feature of it was that Tilak was ranged against Ranade, Telang, Bhandarkar and others and was thereafter regarded as a champion of orthodoxy, although it was quite an unfair characterisation. As a matter of fact Tilak and Ranade had the same outlook on how social reform should come, but so far as educative and propaganda work was concerned Tilak had a definite preference for political work and Ranade believed in simultaneous educative work on all fronts. His position as a Government servant placed certain inevitable limitations on his political activity, particularly after he became a High Court Judge in 1893.

A circular letter signed by Ranade, Satyendranath Tagore, Lalshankar Umiyashankar and a number of eminent men from all over India with a questionnaire as an accompaniment was published along with the report of the eighth session of the Social Conference at Madras in 1894. The letter stated, *inter alia*: "Under the vivifying influences that are at present at work, India is regaining, however slowly, a national consciousness and life. Efforts are being made to strengthen social union, to interpret social usages in their true sense and to remove unnecessary and inconvenient restrictions. These are favourable indications. Our social organisation is not without its good features and they are not few ; but there are also certain matters in which reform is urgently needed. Old bonds



are losing their hold on the public mind. Such of them as are congenial to the healthy growth of our society need to be strengthened and new ones substituted in place of those which do not suit the changed circumstances of our country. But no real progress in social matters is possible without public sympathy and earnest co-operation. With a view, therefore, to securing such sympathy and co-operation, it is desirable to ascertain the attitude of the intelligent portion of the community about the more important questions which affect vital social interests. Some of these questions have already engaged the attention of the Social Conference and other associations in the country. We have thought it fit to send the accompanying questions in the hope that you will be good enough to favour us with your opinion on the points raised therein and endeavour to obtain and send to us the written opinions of your friends whom you may consult on these questions. You need answer only such questions as you may choose for yourself. It is proposed to compile and publish the opinions thus collected with a view to enlightening public opinion and to directing our particular efforts to those reforms which may be generally approved of. Such a compilation will, it is hoped, be of some help to the Social Conference and the several associations that have been taking great interest in social questions."

The following 32 items were tackled in the form of questions. How many replies were received and whether any publication based on the replies saw the light of day is not known. But very probably the response was poor since no reference to the circular letter and the questionnaire is met with in the subsequent annual addresses of Ranade. The questions, however, serve to show what ideas and objectives were engaging the minds of the leaders of the Social Conference in those days. Here are the questions :

(1) FEMALE EDUCATION : Female education is not progressing as rapidly as it ought to do. Are there any special reasons in your province for such a state of things? If so, state them. What steps in your opinion are needed to carry on this work with more vigour? If you think that the present course of studies is not suited, what course would you recommend for girls? Are you and others in your town prepared to help pecuniarily or otherwise for spread of female education on the lines that you may suggest? What system of female education in your opinion would be popular and meet

the requirements of our family life and surroundings?

(2) PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF SPIRITS AND INTOXICATING DRUGS : What intoxicating drugs are in more general use in your province? What remedies may be adopted to check their use? Will the people in your town agree to co-operate in a movement for asking the authorities to remove from the heart of towns the shops for the sale of spirits and other intoxicating drugs? Would not the location of such shops outside the limits of towns do some good?

In the case of classes which are more particularly addicted to the use of intoxicating drugs and drinks, would it not be possible to do something through the spiritual and caste leaders of those communities to check the evil?

(3) RELIGIOUS DISPUTES BETWEEN HINDUS AND MAHOMEDANS : In what places in your province have there been religious disputes between Hindus and Mahomedans? What were these due to? If you are aware of any respective rights of the two communities as regards public processions in your province, state them. Would it not be possible for the leaders of the two communities in your town to form a committee with a view to fixing the customary usage and to settle the disputes amicably when they arise, and keep up the good feeling between them both? If so, state if such leaders are willing to form a committee of conciliation.

(4) INTERCOMMUNION IN FOOD AND INTERMARRIAGE : What subdivisions of your caste allow intercommunion in food at present? Do you think that intermarriage between such sub-divisions would be greatly beneficial to both? If so, would not the more intelligent men in your province be prepared to actively co-operate in bringing about the desired object?

(5) PROSTITUTES AND DANCING GIRLS : (a) At present the houses of prostitutes are situated in the heart of towns. Do you not think that this is dangerous to public morals? What remedies would you propose to check the evil? (b) It is not unusual among some of our rich people to have nautch girls on occasions of religious ceremonies such as marriage, thread-ceremony etc. How far is this practice salutary, and if any evils result from it, how will you check them?



(6) HIGH-CASTE CHILD WIDOWS : (a) Considering the pitiable condition of our high-caste child-widows, would it not be desirable to allow them to re-marry? If you think that they may be allowed to do so under certain restrictions, what restrictions, in your opinion, are necessary to ensure the sympathy of the people? (b) How far is the public in your place prepared to allow the remarriage of such child-widows before puberty? (c) In what castes is the custom of disfiguring widows prevalent in your province? Is it not generally looked upon with disfavour? If so, ascertain how far people are ready to co-operate in discouraging the custom?

(7) SEA-VOYAGE TO DISTANT COUNTRIES : Do you not think that the time has come to remove all social impediments in the way of those persons who go to foreign countries for education, trade or similar other purposes, and are you not of the opinion that these persons should be freely re-admitted into their caste? If you and others think some conditions should be imposed to conciliate caste feelings what are the minimum conditions, which people in your parts are prepared to impose?

(8) CUSTOM OF EMPLOYING HIRED MOURNERS : Do you not consider that the custom of employing hired mourners prevailing among certain classes should be condemned altogether? So also would you not like to discourage the practice of crying loudly in public streets, when a funeral procession is passing?

(9) PANCHAYATS : In how many villages that you have seen have you noted the ruinous effects of mutual animosities fomented by factions? If you have found any in your district, will the people of your place be prepared to assist the people of such villages in establishing Panchayats for amicably settling such disputes? If there are any difficulties in the way, what are they? How could they be removed?

(10) EARLY MARRIAGE AND EXTRAVAGANT MARRIAGE AND FUNERAL EXPENSES : (a) Many people at present marry improvidently and spend large sums beyond their means on marriage. By reason of the inability of parents to support themselves and their children, general impoverishment results and rich families are reduced to beggary. Is it not desirable that this state of things should be

checked? If so, what remedies would you propose to check the evil? Would not the people in your province be prepared to discourage such improvident marriages by withholding aid, pecuniary or otherwise, and refusing to attend the celebration of such marriages?

(b) If a rule be made that boys should, in no case, be married before they have completed the age of 16 and girls before 10, would not the people in your province observe the same?

(c) Some people marry a second wife while the first is living. Do you not think that some restrictions are necessary in such a case? If so, what restrictions should be imposed?

(d) Some men marry girls of tender age, though they themselves are far advanced in age. Is it not necessary to condemn such marriages? Will people in your district have any objection to a prohibition of the marriage by old men after they have passed the age of 45 or 50?

(e) Is not the practice of receiving money as consideration for giving daughters in marriage condemned in your caste or province? Would not the people in your district exert themselves to entirely put it down?

(f) Are not *Hunda* demands now growing beyond reasonable limits? Is it not desirable to put some limits on such demands? What limit would you propose? Will it not be more beneficial to stop the practice of paying *Hunda* and introduce instead of it the system of investing the amount in the name of the bride in some safe security?

(g) Do your caste people spend extravagantly on marriages? If so, in what particular respects are they extravagant? In what particulars can the expenditure be curtailed?

(h) Do people in your province spend large sums of money in giving caste dinners in memory of or after the death of a relative? Do you not think that there is much room for reform in this matter also, without hurting the feelings of the parties concerned?

In respect of all these points how far can caste Panchayats be utilised to enforce rules made by them? If Panchayats cannot be so utilised, what other associations would you suggest?

(11) CLUBS : At present clubs are established in several places. If you think that improvements are needed in these, what should they be? Is it not desirable to increase their number? What



practical steps do you propose for making these institutions more popular and useful?

(12) COMPETENT MIDWIVES AND NURSES: Have you not observed that the want of skilful midwives and nurses is much felt? If widows or other women were trained for the profession of midwives and nurses, would not people of your district avail themselves of their assistance? If any such women be prepared to learn the profession will not people assist them pecuniarily?

(13) NATIONAL EDUCATION: Large numbers of children are at present unable to avail themselves of the benefits of education by reason of the poverty and ignorance of their parents or other causes. Do you not think it necessary that every child should receive elementary education at least for four or five years? What steps should in your opinion be adopted to secure this object? Government may perhaps be moved to help us in this matter, but will the people be prepared to help themselves? Could the current of our charities be diverted to this object? If so, what steps do you think should be taken for the purpose? If you think that there are difficulties in the way of introducing the system of national education in your province, what are those difficulties? What remedies, if any, suggest themselves to you for removing them?

(14) SCHOOL-HOUSES AND PLAY-GROUNDS: Do you not think that at least in large villages and towns every school should have a house of its own, and that a play-ground should be attached to it? Government will probably assist in this matter, but will the people come forward to do so considering this a proper object of charity?

(15) BOARDING-SCHOOLS: Several people have to send their sons to large towns for education. But there being no proper provision for their boarding and lodging, many boys are put to great inconvenience, and some of them go astray. Under these circumstances don't you think that some suitable provision is necessary with respect to boarding, lodging and proper control of these students in large towns? If boarding-houses were established would the people of your district help pecuniarily? What arrangements would you like to have in the boarding-houses that have been established

already or that may be established hereafter?

(16) KINDERGARTEN-SYSTEM : Is it not now desirable to adopt the Kindergarten system for imparting education to small children with a view to making the education of children more popular? If you think that there are some draw-backs in the system or some difficulty in the way of introducing it, what are they? How can they be removed?

(17) EDUCATION OF BACKWARD CLASSES : Do you not think that some special provision should be made for the instruction of classes which are backward in education? What provision do you propose for your district? Could the current of our charities be turned in this direction also?

(18) EDUCATION OF POOR BOYS : Many poor children, who are intelligent and promising, are at present compelled to abandon their course of study for want of suitable means. Don't you think that the nation loses the benefit of their talents? Would the people of your district raise a fund for assisting such students? If so, what scheme do you propose for the management of the fund? What should be the conditions on which alone pecuniary help is to be given?

(19) LIBRARIES AND GYMNASIA : Is it not necessary at present to provide greater facilities to the people for reading and physical exercise with a view to creating a taste for these? If you think that free libraries and gymnasia should be established at different places in your district until an interest in these is created among the people, would you and others in your town assist in establishing such libraries and gymnasia?

(20) HOME EDUCATION : Do you not think that in the matter of home education our people appear rather indifferent? If so, how can this state of things be improved?

(21) CHARITABLE DISPENSARIES : Have you not observed that people in villages have to put up with great inconvenience for want of due provision for medical aid? If efforts were made to establish charitable dispensaries for providing European and native



medicines, would not people in your district be ready to assist? If you are of the opinion that it is necessary to divert the course of charities in this direction, in what way can this be done?

(22) PANJARPOLES : Merchants and traders have established *Panjarpoles* in various places for helpless cattle. If you think that some improvements are necessary in these, please state them. Just as these institutions are established for helpless dumb animals, is it practicable to have a similar charitable institution in your town for helpless human beings, who have become disabled by infirmities or age to earn their livelihood? If so, will the people in your district be willing to help in the matter? State if such an institution should be separate. Cannot the *Panjarpole* authorities be induced to include this relief in their charity?

(23) STREET BEGGARS AND MENDICANTS : It is a great question as to what should be done for our beggars and mendicants. It is a matter demanding serious consideration whether the existing state of things with regard to street-beggars and mendicants should be allowed to continue or whether some improvement should be made in it.

The first question to be decided is : are all the classes of street-beggars and mendicants worthy of our charity? If not, from which of them may our charity be withheld. Is it practicable in your town to prevent able-bodied men and women from begging from door to door and make some separate provision for them? If an institution like the *Panjarpole* were established for the whole body of really helpless beggars and mendicants, would the people in your district approve of the project and assist in the matter? Do you not think that some special provision should be made for poor students, who actually live on alms while prosecuting their studies? If so, what kind of provision do you suggest? If you think that all able-bodied beggars should be made to work for their maintenance rather than be given free alms, what suitable employment could you find for them in your town?

(24) DEVASTHANS AND ANNASATRAS (Religious endowments and free boarding houses) : Are there any *Devasthans*, *Annasatras* or *Sadavartas* in your province, and at what place? Are they managed properly? If any are found to be mismanaged, what is the cause

of mismanagement and what remedies would you suggest for their better management?

(25) KIRTANS AND PURANS : *Kirtans* and *Purans* are to some extent very useful means for imparting religious and moral instruction, but do you not find that these institutions fail to serve the purpose for which they seem to be intended? To what do you attribute this? If you are of the opinion that some improvements are needed in these institutions, what are they? Could you suggest means by which we could meet the requirements of the times through their agency?

(26) DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES : The real object of dramatic performances is not kept in view and they would appear to have become mere means of amusement. Could you suggest means to make this institution more useful? Would not the representation of our social evils by means of dramatic performances be effectual?

(27) SHIMGA AND MOHARAM : Is it not desirable to discourage as much as possible the improper and objectionable ways in which *Moharam* and *Shimga* are celebrated by some of our people? If so, what remedies do you propose?

(28) HOLY PLACES : Is the money spent at these places usefully spent? If not, in what places within your knowledge is the charity misdirected? If you have observed anywhere any misdirected expenditure, state details. How can it be curtailed without injuring the religious susceptibilities of the people? If there are any holy places in your district, please state if any efforts have been made to provide separate buildings for the accommodation of pilgrims and to establish religious and charitable institutions at any of the several places? If not do you not think it desirable that efforts should be made in this direction? What kinds of religious and charitable institutions should, you think, be established and where? Are decent shelters provided on the spots reserved for the cremation of dead bodies?

(29) DISTRICT CONFERENCE : Do you not think that the establishment of a conference in every *zilla* (district) to discuss social questions will be of great use? If so, will not the people of your



district be willing to hold such a conference once a year?

(30) ITINERANT LECTURERS : Will the people of your province be prepared to make due provision for the expense of itinerant lecturers to explain to the masses such of the social reforms as may be approved of and found to need immediate action?

(31) PERMANENT FUND : Do you not think it necessary to raise a permanent fund for the expenses required to do the needful in the matter of awakening public opinion on questions of social reform? What means do you propose for raising such a fund? Would the people divert the current of their charities towards the above object?

(32) GENERAL : If there be any other questions, besides the above, deserving immediate consideration, please state them and give your opinion about them.

Although Ranade favoured all these reforms, it must be remembered that what he emphasised was not this or that reform but the spirit behind them as has been pointed out earlier. As he said in Madras in 1898 : “ The issue is not this or that particular reform about which people have so much controversy but the general spirit of purity, justice, equality, temperance and mercy which should be infused into our minds and which should illumine our hearts. Is it to be the spirit of justice, charity, mercy, toleration and appreciation of all, or is it to be exclusiveness, haughtiness, pride, cruelty and misery of all kinds? The choice lies with us and we may choose which we prefer.”

## X

### FATHER OF INDIAN ECONOMICS

THE ENTIRE credit for having laid the firm foundations of what has now been recognised as Indian Economics must indisputably go to Ranade. Political economy was the name that was given by British economists to the science of economics of their country and, for some time, it was held that what British economists said in regard to Britain held good in regard to India also. Indian public men and the University of Bombay nursed this illusion for long, but when Ranade appeared on the scene and propounded cogently and convincingly that the principles of that science were not of an eternal and axiomatic character and that their application to Indian conditions must be made only in the light of India's peculiar political, cultural and social posture, he seemed to provide, as it were, a new vision.

Ranade did this systematically for the first time in a paper that he read at the Deccan College Union in July 1892. He expounded the important factors that had made for the economic, industrial, agricultural and financial situation as it then obtained and pointed out the directions in which it needed to be modified. He had tackled several topics of economic significance much earlier in his contributions to the Sarvajanic Sabha quarterly, addresses to the Industrial Conference and his public speeches, with the same or similar ideas in his mind that he put forth in his Deccan College address, but on this occasion he systematically embodied his ideas together. This address, his lectures on Swadeshi trade and industries that he delivered in Poona in 1872-73, his addresses at the Industrial Conference sessions and a series of articles he wrote in the *Times of India* on the question of imposing a countervailing, protective duty on the imports of sugar in India, in May and June 1899, i.e. about a year and a half before his death, constitute the sources of his entire economic thinking. They are the foundations for



his title to being designated and recognised as the Father of Indian Economics or founder of the School of Indian Economics.

Ranade laid down: "If in politics and social sciences, time, place and circumstances, the endowments and aptitudes of men, their habits and customs, their laws and institutions and their previous history have to be taken into account, it must be strange indeed that in the economic aspect of our life, one set of general principles should hold good everywhere for all time and place and for all stages of civilisation". Free political institutions were considered unsuitable for India by the British administrators and even by University professors who strangely echoed their views but free trade, unrestricted and indifferent free trade, was considered good for India, because it was found to be good for Britain at that time ! This absence of restrictions also did not operate uniformly. Foreign companies like the Railway Corporations were induced to take up construction of rail-roads not of their free will and at their own risk but under a guaranteed system of interest on the capital invested. But the same State declined to help other enterprises in the same way in the name of free trade and free enterprise. Ranade, with his liberal outlook, did not ascribe this inconsistency to deliberate design, but it was there all the same and he deplored it every now and then and harped on the State taking initiative to industrialise the country and encourage its economic uplift.

As India was an undeveloped and industrially backward country, Ranade exhorted the state from time to time to adopt a policy of aiding the peasantry to take to progressive methods of production, of freeing them from the incubus of ancestral, perennial indebtedness, of starting land mortgage banks, promoting co-operation and making them real proprietors in order to provide the necessary incentive by fixing a revenue settlement permanently or semi-permanently. He pleaded, but in vain, for encouraging industrialisation by starting state factories for the manufacture of certain goods and thus showing the way to the people. In the Deccan College paper, referred to before, he said : "The State is now more and more recognised as the national organ for taking care of national needs in all matters likely to be so effective and economic as national effort. This is a correct view to take of the true functions of the State. To relegate them to the simple duty of maintaining peace and order is really to deprive the community of many of the advantages of social union. Education, both liberal and technical, posts

and telegraphs, railways and canal communications, the pioneering of new enterprises, the insurance of risky undertakings — all these functions are usefully discharged by the State. The question is one of time, fitness and expediency, not one of liberty and rights. In our own country the State has similarly enlarged its functions with advantage. The very fact that the rulers belong to a race with superior advantages, imposes this duty on them of attempting things which no native rulers, past or present, could as well achieve or possibly even think of. This obligation is made more peremptory by the fact that the State claims to be the sole landlord and is certainly the largest capitalist in the country. While the State in India has done much in this way in the working of iron and coal fields and in the experiments made about cotton and tobacco and in tea and coffee and cinchona plantations, it must be admitted that as compared with the resources and needs of the country, these attempts are as nothing by the side of what has been attempted with success in France, Germany and other countries, but which unhappily has not been attempted in this country.”

Ranade would almost seem to be anticipating the concepts of a welfare State and a socialist State in this paper. He further said : “ Even if political considerations forbid independent action in the matter of different duties, pioneering a new enterprise is a duty which the Government might more systematically undertake with advantage. In truth there is no difference of principle between lending such support and guidance by the free use of its credit and superior organisation in pioneering industrial undertakings or subsidising private co-operative effort and its guaranteeing minimum interest to railway companies. The building up of national and not merely State credit on broad foundations by helping people to acquire confidence in a free and largely ramified banking system, so advantageously worked in Europe under different forms, has also not been attempted here. There is lastly the duty cast on it of utilising indigenous resources and organising them in a way to produce in India in State factories all products of skill which the State departments require in the way of stores. These are only a few of the many directions in which the highest statesmanship will have a field all its own for consideration and action. They will no doubt receive such consideration if only the minds of the rulers were once thoroughly freed from the fear of offending the so-called maxims of economic science. It is time that a new departure should



take place in this connection and it is with a view to drawing public attention to this necessity that I have ventured to place before you the results of modern economic thought. In this as in other matters, the conditions of Indian life are more faithfully reproduced in some of the continental countries and in America than in happy England, proud of its position, strong in its insularity and the home of the richest and busiest community in the modern industrial world. ”

What strikes a student of Ranade's speeches and writings on a variety of subjects is that while he appreciated the many good points of the British rule and looked up to the British race as a disciple should look up to his master, the economic policy of British rulers in India was the one field in which he took up the position of an outspoken critic and went to the extent of saying that the process of ruination must be arrested in mutual interest. For many years he carried on this educative campaign but it was attended with no success. While he was engaged in doing this, he attempted to present all that he wanted to say against a theoretical and learned background by enunciating what different economists had said before and by asking whether that was true of India and by stating what Indian conditions demanded for her economic uplift. For this purpose he made an exhaustive study of English economic doctrines, English economic history, continental theories and practices and then formulated his theoretical approach as well as practical policy so far as they could be applied to Indian conditions and thus earned the richly deserved epithet of founder of the school of Indian Economics.

This is why we get references to such names as the Physiocrats, Ricardo, Adam Smith, List and others in his Deccan College paper. He put down one after another what he called the assumptions of the Classical School of economists and examining them carefully he clearly demonstrated how they were invalid in the Indian context. He briefly stated the assumptions thus : (1) That national economics is essentially individualistic and has no separate collective aspect. (2) That the individual or typical economic man has no desire but that of promoting his self-interest or at least that is the strongest motive power. (3) That this self-interest is best promoted by the largest production of wealth, i.e. articles with value in exchange at the least trouble. (4) That such pursuit of private gain by each individual promotes best the general good. (5) That the free and unlimited competition of individuals in the race and

struggle of life is the only safe and natural regulator. (6) That all customary and State regulation is an encroachment on natural liberty. (7) That each individual knows best his interest and has the capacity and desire of acting according to his knowledge. (8) That there is perfect freedom and equality in the power of contract among individuals. (9) That capital and labour are always free and ready to move from one employment to another where better remuneration is expected. (10) That there is a universal tendency of profits and wages to seek a common level. (11) That population tends to outstrip the means of subsistence. (12) That demand and supply always tend to adjust each other mutually.

Ranade then proceeded to explode these assumptions as so many myths. He said : " These assumptions lie at the root of all dogmatical treatment of the subject. It need not be said that they are literally true of no existing community. To the extent that they are approximately true of any state or society, the assumptions furnish valid explanations of its economical status. Even then they furnish no suggestion as to its dynamical progress or development. As these assumptions do not absolutely hold good of even the most advanced societies, it is obvious that in societies like ours, they are chiefly conspicuous by their absence. With us an average individual man is, to a large extent, the very antipodes of the economic man. The family and the caste are more powerful than the individual in determining his position in life. Self-interest in the shape of desire for wealth is not absent but it is not the only or principal motor. The pursuit of wealth is not the only ideal aimed at. There is neither the desire nor the aptitude for free and unlimited competition except within certain pre-determined grooves and groups. Customs and state regulation are more powerful than competition and status more decisive in its influence than contract. Neither capital nor labour is mobile and enterprising or intelligent enough to shift from place to place. Wages and profit are fixed and not elastic and responsive to change of circumstances. Population follows its own law, being cut down by disease and famine while production is almost stationary, the bumper harvest of one year being needed to provide against the uncertainties of alternate bad seasons. In a society so constituted, the tendencies assumed as axiomatic are not only inoperative but are actually deflected from their proper direction. You might as well talk of the tendency of mountains



to be washed away into the sea or of the valleys to fill up or of the sun to get cold as reasons for our practical condition within a measurable distance of time."

Curiously enough what Ranade said so many years ago was said in substance by Jawaharlal Nehru on November 28, 1959, nearly 12 years after India had become a free and sovereign country, at Ahmedabad at the Laski Institute while opening the Laski Memorial Hall there. Nehru said : "For the last several years we have been talking in terms of economic theories contained in Western books. It should be remembered that even an economist thinks and writes in terms of the individual and society of that country. They are obviously different from the background of under-developed and poverty-stricken countries. It is necessary to put oneself in relation to the facts of life and not to go by the text books which might have no relation to problems in India for solving which it is useless to plough the sands of classical British economic lore." When Ranade was expounding his economic thought, all industrially progressive countries excluding England, were not only discarding free trade and adopting fair and protected trade but they were also embarking on a policy of direct assistance to industry and implementation of aggressive economic policy. English reaction to this expressed itself in favour of preserving British markets for British goods and later it developed into an Imperial Preference policy. Ranade, therefore, was fully justified in laying down principles and formulating policies with the object of securing the prosperity of India's trade and industry. Agreeing a great deal with Frederick List, the German economist, he urged that India's trade policy must not be considered in isolation but that it must be part of her general economic policy that would draw out her latent resources, both material and human and lead to moral and material prosperity. Like List he had great faith in the guiding, protecting and co-ordinating role of the State not only in economic but also other spheres of organised human life.

In one very important respect Ranade differed from List who believed that the natural division of labour brought about by climatological and other physical factors must be taken as final. A corollary to the acceptance of this theory was that no tropical country should aspire to be an industrial country, that only Western countries should have the monopoly of producing manufactured

products and tropical countries should always remain as suppliers of raw material. India and China which are tropical had a highly developed system of manufactures before the machine age even in the metallurgical and chemical manufactures, besides in the field of cotton, woollen and silk piecegoods and making tools and instruments of production. It was the industrial revolution in the West which had its beginning in England that helped the West outstrip the East, because the revolution was the result of employment of the scientific inventions in industry and ushering in of the machine age. But the East had the far more important advantages of plenty of raw materials, both agricultural and geological and when these were combined with scientific knowledge and technical skill, the East would not take long to come into its own and even surpass the West in the field of manufacturing industries. Japan had proved to be an object-lesson to the Eastern countries in this respect even when she had not the advantages of China and India in respect of raw materials. Ranade's mind quickly grasped all this and he expressed great keenness on India making industrial progress, desirably with State aid and without it with self-reliance on the part of India's enterprising business communities. Ranade's opinion was that Indian political economy must have the whole field of India's economic well-being as its 'universe of discourse' and economists in India must develop that science from this point of view and plan all commercial and industrial development of India accordingly.

"Those who counsel non-interference on the authority of political economy as a hypothetical, *a priori*, science is one thing while practical political economy as applied to the particular conditions of backward countries is a different thing altogether. American, Australian and Continental political economy, as applied in practice, permits many departures from the *a priori* positions of the abstract science. If authority were wanted for this assertion, we could refer to Mill's political economy. The quotation is peculiarly appropriate as it lays down the duties of Government in countries circumstanced like India," says Ranade in his essay, "Netherlands, India and the Cultural System" and quotes Mill as follows :

"A good government will give all its aid in such a shape as to encourage and nurture any rudiments it may find of a spirit of individual exertion. It will be assiduous in removing obstacles



and discouragements to voluntary enterprise and in giving whatever facilities and whatever direction and guidance may be necessary. Its pecuniary means will be applied when practicable in aid of private efforts rather than in suppression of them and it will call into play its machinery of rewards and honours to elicit such efforts. Government aid, when given merely in default of private enterprise, should be so given as to be, as far as possible, a course of education to people. Government must undertake to do 'the things which are made incumbent upon it by the helplessness of the public, in such manner as shall tend not to increase and perpetuate, but correct this helplessness'."

Ranade wanted that each individual should develop to his full possibilities. Yet unchecked individualism was considered by him as unnatural and wasteful. He did not regard with favour absolute right to private property or freedom. The chief function of the economist, according to Ranade, is to study the past, present and prospective movements of social life in the sphere of acquisition and utilisation of resources and the fulfilment of this function by the science of economics alone can entitle it to be called a social science. The study of India's socio-economic conditions led him to the firm belief that without industrial progress there was no opportunity for Indians to live a better life. India's poverty to him was a deep conviction and he did not ascribe this poverty wholly or mainly to foreign domination. Even before foreign domination, India was poor, because her main occupation was agriculture. He conceded that foreign rule did lead to exploitation due to high cost of the foreign administration in the civil and military spheres and whatever reduction that could be secured in that cost would give some relief and therefore in his view an India governed by Indians would undoubtedly be better able to utilise India's resources and organise all activities in national interest. Yet to him India's poverty was so fundamental that in his opinion a mere transfer of political power to Indian hands would not improve matters very much. It was a question of planning and arranging economic resources, harnessing them to the best use, augmenting them and industrialising the country by modern means, machinery and inventions. Planned industrialisation was in his opinion the way out. Even agriculture needed to be dealt with differently and old, time-honoured ways had to be revised and

adopted to ways of modern agriculture prevailing in other progressive countries. In Ranade's concept of social organisation the State could play the part not only of the friend, philosopher and guide to its citizens but even as their teacher and task-master. So he favoured a State-regulated industrialisation of India but there was only indifference to all his appeals from not only the Home Government in England but even the Government of India on the spot.

This did not deter him from advocating a number of reforms on the basis of self-reliance. He considered it his duty to say what he thought was right, no matter whether he met with success or failure in having his views approved or accepted. So his fundamental prescription for the eradication of poverty was industrialisation. He had noted that the problem of poverty had become all the more difficult because the population of the country was continuously increasing and there was no provision to feed it. He recommended a programme of migration abroad as also into the sparsely populated parts of the country which could be developed. In his essay on this subject he said : " A regular system of immigration from thickly populated poor agricultural tracts to sparsely peopled new and virgin districts is a desideratum. The halting efforts made in this direction produce no good, for the concessions are not liberal enough and there is no prescience about it. The ancient rulers who settled waste districts and founded towns with flourishing and extensive industries, made no difficulty about granting liberal concessions." Ranade's suggestion was implemented only to the extent of sending Indian labourers to the colonies abroad under indentures, but their experience there has not proved very encouraging to their countrymen at home. Later on, colonies like Australia and Canada far from encouraging Indian immigration placed restrictions on their entry on the ground of race and colour. Even after the attainment of political independence, there is no effort to see that Indians emigrate to the less populated parts of Africa, Australia and the North and South Americas. Wherever they have secured a footing, Indians have proved to be good colonisers like the Sikhs in Canada. Now, questions like rearranging the population of the world so as to secure an equilibrium in the light of the world's resources have assumed international proportions and they could be solved only by a body like the U. N. O. and its associate organisations. Ranade was farsighted enough to suggest that one way out of India's poverty was for Indians to get out of



India and settle as citizens in other parts of the world, which awaited human habitation and material development.

As has been said before, when Ranade spoke of industrialising India, he meant that India's agriculture also needed industrialisation. In this field even, he wanted the State to act as a pioneer and a demonstrator and a mentor by running State farms that secured larger production, quality production and economic production. He wanted private landowners of big estates to follow in Government's footsteps and small holders to form co-operative unions for the same purpose. Thus better seeds, manures, fertilisers and such mechanical equipment as was required could be secured. He was keen on removing their chronic indebtedness by debts being written off or settled on concessional terms and land revenue being fixed at a moderate level which might be revised if necessary, some years later, in terms of money. His scheme of an experimental agricultural bank for a taluka has already been described earlier. He also pleaded for such tenancy legislation as would secure fair rent and tenancy to the tenant-cultivator. Ranade thus had in mind all the categories of men engaged in the domain of agriculture and he wanted a balanced prosperity for all of them. He was aware that land would pass from the hands of incapable farmers into the hands of capable ones but to this he had no objection. He did not, however, wish that it should pass on merely to the money-lenders who had no interest in land and production and such a process he desired to arrest.

The only way to raise the common people to a level of decent subsistence was industrialisation, according to Ranade. "There can be no doubt that the permanent salvation of the country depends upon the growth of Indian manufactures and commerce and that all other remedies can only be temporary palliatives," said Ranade in his essay on Indian foreign emigration adding further that, "At the same time, it must be admitted that this diversity and change of occupation is a very arduous undertaking. It pre-supposes a change of habits, it postulates the previous growth of culture and a spirit of enterprise, an alertness of mind, and elasticity of temper, a readiness to meet and conquer opposition, a facility of organisation, social ambition and aspiration, a mobile and restless condition of capital and labour, all which qualities and changes are the slow growth of centuries of freedom and progress." But for lack of all this, he was not prepared to wait. With Government

help if it was forthcoming and without it if it did not come, he appealed to his countrymen to put their hands to industrialisation from the platform of the Industrial Conference. He regarded State help as a subordinate factor in the problem. He said, "Our own exertion and our own resolutions must conquer the difficulties which are chiefly of our own creation." He was also convinced that if Indian business communities followed in the footsteps of their European counterparts, not only would there be growth of trade and commerce, but also productive industry. In this belief he encouraged the establishment of new industries such as the textile and paper mills in Poona.

All these activities of Ranade provide a key to his almost religious fervour for industrialism. It sprang from some deep-seated convictions. He saw that the solution of the poverty of India's masses was industrialisation. But the circumstances were altogether discouraging when Ranade began his fervid propaganda in this behalf. Modernisation of industry was the need of the hour, while all the skill of Indian industry in the past was centred in the handicrafts and cottage smithies and reorientation of it in the direction of starting factories, using machines and power, forming joint stock companies for trade, commerce, banking and insurance had to be immediately made. Most of such enterprise was concentrated in the hands of foreign, chiefly British capital. The Government was not only British in personnel and appearance but British also in sympathies, interests and policies. The transfer of power from the East India Company to the Crown had made matters only worse. Instead of a trading company whose affairs were reviewed and regulated at least every 20 years by Parliament while considering renewal of its charter, the whole 'nation of shopkeepers' became interested in profitable trade with India. The result was that before long all development of trade and commerce which held the key to further industrialisation was in the hands of foreigners. Transport, insurance and banking were dominated by them and they were not friendly to the cause of India's industrial development. Thus the political and economic domination by a foreign country made Ranade exclaim once that, "The industry and commerce of the country, such as it was, is passing out of our hands and except in the large Presidency towns, the country is fed, clothed, warmed, washed, lighted, helped and comforted generally by a thousand arts and industries in the manipulation of which its sons have every day a decreasing share."



He added, "This is our condition and when the whole situation is thus taken in at one view, I feel that we are standing on the edge of a precipice and the slightest push down will drive us into the abyss below of unmixed and absolute helplessness".

Although there was little encouragement from the Government, Ranade went on urging remedies that he thought were expedient. He gave the utmost importance to self-help and the Swadeshi idea was much popularised by him. He saw the basic importance of available natural resources as a controlling influence on the possibilities of industrialisation and he found that for some industries, India was exceptionally rich so far as natural resources went as other thinkers and writers on these matters did. There is no doubt that India is rich in agricultural, mineral, forest and marine resources, but modern industrialisation requires such a variety of raw materials and other accessories that no country, however rich, can be wholly self-dependent and import of necessary materials to run well-developed industries is inevitable. Ranade did not, therefore, think of self-dependence in everything in that narrow sense. This was also necessary for efficiency in production. He was not content merely with producing what India required, but he wanted to develop India's foreign trade in manufactured or semi-manufactured goods. He wanted Indian industrialists and commercial men to study the structure of exports and imports to see how the export of raw materials could be stopped and either manufactured and semi-manufactured goods could be sent out. When he saw that the Government of India was unwilling to help, he advised self-help and co-operation to the business community and refused to get disheartened. When he saw that radical change in national policy by way of granting protection to industries, by subsidies or by tariff manipulation could not be secured, he urged that for the defence of the country itself, adequate transport arrangements and a minimum of industrialisation were necessary. Government had already established a network of railways for military and commercial reasons. He wrote : "In the interests of military defence, the necessity of the Indian Government being provided with its own arms and ammunition is so obvious that it is not likely to be disputed. The same justification exists for the manufacture of rolling stock and other materials likely to be required for the state railways. For commercial success, the extension of the works,

so as to meet private demand will be soon forced upon Government." Had Ranade's counsel been accepted there would have been a well-developed engineering industry in India when the First World War broke out. There would also have come into existence an iron and steel industry before the Second World War came upon us and when paucity of all engineering and steel goods was keenly felt. Whatever Ranade pleaded for in the eighties and nineties of the last century was undertaken later not only during the British regime but is also being followed in the five-year plans of free India.

Planning has become a very current term now-a-days but as one studies Ranade's writings and follows his thinking on economic and industrial subjects one realises that he was a great planner himself. If he was unable to get over one hurdle, he would let it alone and try to circumvent it in some other way. When he saw that the State was not willing to run industries itself, he urged only pioneering in the industrial field on the part of the State and handing over such concerns to private or joint stock enterprises. He pleaded for supervision of such concerns for some time. He argued : "The factories should be guaranteed continuous and certain demand for their produce at fixed prices, which should include not only the English prices in England, but ship freight, landing and railway charges, insurance and exchange". He added : "A separate department of commerce and manufactures can alone devote itself to this work without frequent oscillations of purpose". A department, having this name, was started during the British period, but it scarcely functioned in the way Ranade intended it to function, viz. to be industrially minded itself and make the people so. When he despaired of the India Government or the Provincial Governments doing anything he observed : "Even if Government be not prepared to take this risk on its own shoulders from fear of English criticism and jealousy, a way might be found for giving effect to arrangements proposed on a small scale by empowering the existing local or municipal boards or creating special corporate boards of trade and commerce to borrow from the Government, at low interest the moneys required and advance them as loans for the improvement of rural and urban industries". Had local bodies been entrusted with such activity, they would have become the centres of interest of whole local areas and they would have also attracted talented and resourceful people.

Ranade had great faith in the collective and co-operative power



of the people. To this end he suggested the formation of district or city committees of capitalists. He said : " All that Government has to do is to organise district or city committees of Indian capitalists, to empower them to receive deposits at fixed rates and lend them at slightly higher rates to the borrowers on the security of lands or houses etc., the excess rate providing for a gradual amortisation of the debt in a definite period, as also insurance charges and working expenses. The loans of these district committees should be allowed priority over all other debts and exempted from all other duties and certain and speedy execution should be permitted to them." When capital was thus made available he wanted two basic principles to be followed: staple industries must first be taken up for being developed as manufactures and secondly they must not only grow out of the country's needs, but its special advantages. Development of luxury trades, he would leave alone unless defence considerations compelled their being tackled. He recommended a study of our raw materials and minerals and building up their manufacture. Thus he once recommended that instead of sending oil seeds abroad, they should be crushed here and oil should be sent. This would encourage mechanised crushing and bring in the manufacturing stage. This in turn would encourage increased production of oil seeds. Similarly instead of exporting wheat or paddy, flour and husked rice should be exported. Instead of exporting raw wool, woollen goods and shawls; instead of rags, paper; in place of wood and timber, carved wood and furniture and so on.

Ranade also discussed the possibilities of developing iron and sugar industries which were not started till after the First World War, chiefly owing to the unhelpful attitude of the Government, though it must be conceded that the technically qualified personnel was also lacking. He was an advocate of technical and industrial education but in the absence of an industrial atmosphere that could not make much progress. Indeed, they are interdependent. Industries have to be artificially set up so that the necessary personnel could be trained. Both the iron and sugar industries have now made considerable progress and in free India, the progress is even more rapid, because the State is completely favourable to their growth. This applies to many other industries also but now India may be said to be well on its way to become an industrial and manufacturing country. In Ranade's day, formulation of a

systematic, comprehensive and constructive economic policy was the primary need. Ranade presented the broad outlines of such a policy in his writings and speeches on economic and industrial subjects and with the progress that India is making under her five-year plans it can well be said that Ranade's ideas are materialising. The spirit of industrialism appeared to him to be the most important single influence favouring the modernisation of India's economy and he was most anxious that such a spirit should possess India's business community. He did not think that India did not have the necessary capital. But it was shy. It needed diversion from unproductive channels. As an advocate of Indo-British co-operation in other fields, he was not opposed to British capital also being invested in India, because he knew that with it would come the progressive business atmosphere, industrial organisation and the necessary psychology for further industrialisation. People's habits would change and there would be increasing urbanisation. It is not difficult to get hold of all these ideas in his numerous, though somewhat scattered, writings.

The study of the development of economic ideas in India during the last nearly hundred years has led a discerning critic to state that two distinctive viewpoints have emerged among Indian economists. He calls one school the Dadabhai Naoroji School and the other the Ranade School. The Naoroji School looked upon the British rule as the primary cause of India's growing backwardness while the Ranade School drew attention to the various deficiencies in India's socio-economic structure as constituting the real underlying cause of India's lack of growth. Ranade, as it were, sought to extricate the economic issues from the political. He influenced substantially the general form and content of Indian economic thought. State intervention was conceived as the means to overcome the deficiencies in India's economic institutions. Ranade and his school generally concentrated upon the study of the detailed aspects of various economic phenomena through the historical and the empirical methods. Each economic issue was considered in isolation. The need to evolve a general set of laws and various theories to explain or interpret the nature of the complicated inter-relationship was not sufficiently emphasised. It is to the Ranade tradition that the origin of the general bias of Indian thinkers in regard to State intervention could be traced. Ranade's



essential contribution was to accentuate the need of modifying economic policy in the light of Indian institutional deficiencies i.e. those pertaining to the influence of religion, race, caste, morals, superstitions, etc.

All this purports to say that Ranade did not fully grasp the exploitative character of British rule and the nationally exhaustive nature of the export surplus, calculated at 30 crores of rupees in his *Poverty and un-British Rule in India* by Dadabhai Naoroji and characteristically and picturesquely described by him as 'drain'. It is true that in the several essays Ranade wrote and the addresses he delivered at the sessions of the Industrial Conference, he advocated several individual reforms in isolation to improve the economic condition of his people. They were piecemeal efforts but there was very good reason for his doing so. He had found that the Government in England and also the Government of India were immobile, impervious and incorrigible when the question of big policies for India's economic well-being arose. He was certain that tariff reform, protective measures, subsidies to industrialise the country on modern lines, were impossible until India became fully self-governing and sovereign. He was always for doing what was possible and lay nearest at hand and that explains his efforts at piecemeal reforms although even there he did not meet with any conspicuous success. This is not to say, however, that he did not well realise the exploitative character of British domination or the exhausting nature of the large export surplus. He did know it as well as Dadabhai or Dutt or anybody else did, but he did not choose to harp on it all the time. He tried to wrest whatever could be wrested from the close-fisted British and lost no opportunity of doing so. He considered no situation as hopeless for no situation is hopeless to those who master its real significance and resolve to do their best to improve it.

It was in his address to the first Industrial Conference at Poona held in 1890 that he stated his attitude to the 'drain', which marks his difference from Dadabhai and Dutt. He said, "There are some people who think that as long as we have a heavy tribute to pay to England which takes away nearly 20 crores of our surplus exports, we are doomed and can do nothing to help ourselves. This is, however, hardly a fair or manly position to take up. A portion of the burden represents interest on moneys advanced to or invested in our country and so far from complaining we have reason to be

thankful that we have a creditor who supplies our needs at such a low rate of interest. Another portion represents the value of stores supplied to us, the like of which we cannot produce here. The remainder is alleged to be more or less necessary for the purposes of administration, defence and payment of pensions and though there is cause for complaint that it is not at all necessary, we should not forget the fact that we are enabled by reason of this British connection to levy an equivalent tribute from China by our opium monopoly. I would not, therefore, desire you to divert your energies in the fruitless discussion of this question of tribute, which had better be left to our politicians."

Thus he preferred to leave it to the politicians, the fighters for political rights, to solve questions of economic policy by raising India's constitutional and political status and bringing it on a level with England and the Dominions and get some people to devote their attention exclusively to economic and industrial improvement by methods of self-help and self-reliance, by constructive Swadeshi. Though he was never tired of seeking State help, he was quite clear in his mind that, "State help is after all a subordinate factor in the problem. Our own exertion and our own resolutions must conquer the difficulties, which are chiefly of our own creation." So, Ranade would probably have himself pleaded guilty to the charge, posthumously made against him, that he did not sufficiently emphasise the drain and its exhausting and exploitative character. That was not due to lack of knowledge or intelligence but deliberate policy induced by the then political and economic situation in India and perhaps his position as a Government servant.

Prof. P. R. Brahmanand of the University School of Economics and Sociology, Bombay, has made this fine distinction between Dadabhai and Ranade. According to him Ranade missed the significance of the drain, whatever the reason for it might be. "Had England ruled India in India's interest or had she not extracted a large annual tribute, India would have found herself a well developed country at the end of the 19th century." Ranade would certainly have agreed to this, had he been living. Again, "Many of the sociological evils and economic mobilities and rigidities which Ranade emphasised were the result of the absence of economic progress over a long period. Had economic progress taken its natural course, the incidence of these evils would have been minimised." Ranade would again have gladly agreed to this, had he been living.



The post-Independence experience in economic planning has revealed how the so-called institutional deficiencies have not seriously proved to be an obstacle to economic development. The main difficulty has been the deficiency in the amount of surplus available for capital accumulation. As P. K. Gopalakrishnan has said in his able and exhaustive review of Ranade's contribution to Indian economic thought : "Mahadeo Govind Ranade was the first economist who laid down the conditions of economic progress for India and showed a whole range of possible policy to achieve this progress. The importance of Ranade was that of a very great scientific pioneer. He succeeded more than anybody else in India in isolating the chief categories of Indian economic life. He left to his successors many unsolved problems, but he also indicated ways in which they might be solved. Thus not only early Indian economic thought but modern Indian economics also with its interest in problems of economic development could claim Ranade as its founder."

## XI

### PAINSTAKING AND PERSPICACIOUS HISTORIAN

RANADE'S KEEN interest in Mahratta history dates back to his undergraduate days. It cost him rather dearly as has been explained in Chapter II. Yet this subject occupied his attention almost till he died, because his *Rise of the Mahratta Power* was published in 1900 and his studies of the hey-day and decline of that power were by no means complete by the time he was no more. As Ranade has explained in his preface to this book, it was a joint plan of Ranade and Telang to write a complete history of the Mahrattas. It would appear from the way Ranade writes that the plan was more Telang's than Ranade's. Telang had no doubt seriously set his heart on the task as the appendix to Ranade's book *Gleanings from Mahratta Chronicles* by Telang amply shows. This was a paper read by the late Sir Narayan Chandavarkar before the Deccan College Union on 17 September 1892 on behalf of the late Mr. Justice K. T. Telang. As it happened, however, Telang died prematurely and even Ranade could but see the work half way through. It was Ranade's intention to deal with the progress of the Mahratta confederacy in the Second volume under the title *Growth of the Mahratta Power* and it might perhaps have been followed by an additional volume *Decline of the Mahratta Power*.

The Ranade-Telang plan originated in their desire to put in the proper perspective the place of the Mahrattas and their achievements in the history of India by rectifying the mistakes and misrepresentations of the British writers like Grant Duff who in their turn had mainly depended on Persian sources for their treatment and interpretation. It is true, however, that Grant Duff utilised such Marathi sources also as were available to him. The tradition among British writers of India's history was to regard the part



played in it by the Mahrattas as not of much consequence. Ranade pointed out that it was a serious error of judgment if not deliberate suppression of obvious facts. Ranade's service to the history of India and the Mahratta nationality lies in that he established it beyond doubt for universal understanding that the British had to defeat the Mahrattas and wrest power from their hands before establishing their sway in Western and Central India and that though discomfited the Mahrattas were quite enlightened rulers who had to succumb to a people of superior civilisation. He has clearly demonstrated that there was much in their doings during a period of 150 years of sovereign rule that must evoke admiration and that singles them out as a people whose rise was not "a mere accident due to any chance combination but was a genuine effort on the part of a Hindu nationality, not merely to assert its independence, but to achieve what had not been attempted before — the formation of a confederacy of States, animated by a common patriotism and that the success it achieved was due to a general upheaval—social, religious, political — of all classes of the population."

Till Ranade and Telang had touched this subject Grant Duff was the only prominent historian who had written about the Mahrattas in the same way as Ormes had written about Bengal and Madras happenings, Todd about Rajputs, Wilkes about Mysore, Malcolm about Central India and Elphinstone about the Moghuls. None of them had, as it were, found anything remarkable about the Mahrattas, though Grant Duff had conceded that the Mahrattas were "our predecessors in conquest in India whose power was gradually gaining strength, before it found a head in the far-famed adventurer, Shivaji Bhonsle". He has also casually said again that before the British became the dominant power in India, the Mahrattas held sway over a large territory in India but he did not discuss the character of this sway in detail and apparently he did not think that it was in any way particularly significant or noticeable. Englishmen were accustomed to basing their histories on records in Persian which supplied them with their information about the rulers in Delhi and the Deccan and the contemporaries of Mahratta rulers like Hyder Ali and Tipu. Persian chronicles found their way in English versions but the Marathi chronicles did not. This, presumably, left the impression on the British minds that the history of the Muslim rulers alone was worth any attention.

The *Kavyetihasa Sangraha* was started in 1878, and Ranade's

attention was attracted by it. Writing in it about Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas* Ranade says : “(1) The significance of the religious revival which ran parallel to the political efforts at emancipation and the close intimacy which subsisted between the leaders of the two movements, are not even most distantly alluded to by this historian of the Mahrattas. (2) With few exceptions the characters of the Mahratta heroes have not been well developed; in noted instances full justice is not rendered to them and very few characteristic personal incidents and anecdotes have been preserved by him respecting them. (3) Our author did not take any notice of the literature and philosophy of our people whether ancient or modern. (4) Nor did he even so much as profess to go into the antiquities of the nation. All this should form one of the arguments for a new and comprehensive history of our country being written from an Indian or a Mahratta point of view. The chief object we have proposed to ourselves is not so much to review Grant Duff's history as to bring prominently before the reader and enlarge his interest in the study of our Mahratta Chronicles or *bakhars* many of which are found in all parts of the country. With their help we hope to show that we have a long account to compare and to settle with the foreign writers of our history. In the description of many important events of our national history, the chronicles differ materially from the accounts of the same authors as they are related by Grant Duff and this difference relates to points which affect the moral interest of the story and in some instances vindicate the character of the great men, who well nigh succeeded in establishing a national sovereignty over all India, far from the aspersions of craft and violence freely levelled against them.”

Ranade took it on himself to remove this erroneous belief, viz. that the history of Muslim rulers was alone worth any attention by inviting attention to the need for students of India's history to take into consideration what the Mahrattas had achieved and the reasons behind their achievements, if their study was to be real and complete. “Any one who sees no distinction between the great leaders who helped in the work of building up the Mahratta Confederacy and the careers of Hyder and Tipu in Mysore, Nizam-ul-Mulk at Hyderabad, Suja-ud-Doula in Oudh, Alivardi Khan in Bengal, Ranjit Singh in the Punjab and Suraj Mull in Bharatpur, will never be able to occupy the correct standpoint



in vision from which this history must be studied and he will fail to understand its real import as signally as any native student who tried to account for the British ascendancy in India by crediting the whole success to the adventurous spirit of Clive or the diplomacy of Hastings, forgetting all the while that this adventure and diplomacy only achieved success because they were backed up by the resolution and persistence and resources of the great British nation. Freebooters and adventurers never succeed in building up empires which last for generations and permanently affect the political map of a great continent.”

Elaborating this point further Ranade said, “Unlike the great Subhedars of Provinces who became independent after the death of Aurangzeb, the founder of the Mahratta power and his successors for two generations bore the brunt of the attack of the Moghul Empire at the zenith of its splendour. The military adventurers named above were not backed up by any national force behind them and their power perished with the individuals who founded it. In the case of the Mahratta confederacy, however, it was far otherwise. For ten generations, a succession of great leaders sprang up to fill up the place of those who died in the struggle and the confederacy not only outlived opposition but derived greater strength from the reverses it sustained from time to time, rising Phoenix-like in greater splendour from the very ashes of its apparent ruin. This tenacity showed clearly that the underlying principles had stronger vitality than can be explained by the standard theory of adventure and freebooting or the illustration of a sudden conflagration.” The last words refer to the opinion expressed by Grant Duff that “the turbulent, predatory spirit of the Hindus of Maharashtra, though smothered for a time had its latent embers stirred by the contention of their Mahomedan conquerors, till like the parched grass kindled amid the forests of the Sahyadri mountains, they burst forth in spreading flame and men afar off wondered at the conflagration.”

Ranade then went on to present the salient features of the Mahratta movement for self-assertion and freedom. He stated in the first place that the immediate predecessors of the British rulers of India were not the Mahomedans as is too often taken for granted but they were the Hindu rulers of the country, notably the Mahrattas, who had successfully thrown off the Mahomedan yoke. The Mahratta power arose in Western Maharashtra and

soon its influence extended to the Central Deccan, Karnatak, South India as far as Tanjore, including Mysore. It also embraced Gujarat including Saurashtra, Berar and Nagpur, Malva in Central India, Bundelkhand, Rajputana, Northern India including Delhi, Agra, the Doab and Rohilkhand. Bengal and Oudh were also invaded but were protected from conquest safely by the interposition of British armies. For fifty years, the Delhi emperors were made or unmade by the agents of the Mahratta power. This territory was completely under the power of the members of the Mahratta Confederacy or old Hindu rulers in subordinate alliances with it. The head of this confederacy was the Peshwa who was not only the Chief military leader in his own country, but was also the deputy to the Delhi emperors, kept prisoners in Moghul palaces at Delhi. For all practical purposes, therefore, the chief power in the country was in the hands of Hindu rulers controlled by the Mahrattas. The only exceptions were Bengal and the Madras coast. The Muslim influence had spent itself and the Hindus had asserted their position and become independent rulers of the country with whom the British power had to contest for supremacy.

Ranade's second proposition was that the secret of the Mahratta combination could not be properly understood without appreciating the fact that it was not the work of one man or of a succession of gifted men. The foundation of a national consciousness was laid broad and deep in the hearts of the Mahratta people. It was the upheaval of the whole population, strongly bound together by the common affinities of language, race, religion and literature and seeking further solidarity by a common, independent, political existence. As a first effort, it was wanting in that solidarity of structure that characterised the rise of nationalism in Europe, but there can be no mistake that its essential and distinguishing feature was a feeling of a common nationality. It was a national movement in which all classes co-operated. It had a stronger hold on the vast mass of the rural population. There were class ascendencies and clannish feelings even among the Mahrattas but they were kept under by the political sense of the population in general who joined the national armies for six months in the year and returned to their homes and cultivated their family lands, enjoying their *vatans* in the remaining period. Regard for *vatans* has been a marked feature of Mahratta character so that even commanders of great armies prided themselves more upon their being Patils and



Deshmukhs in their old villages in Maharashtra than on their extensive *jahagirs* in distant lands. Ranade asserted that this feeling of patriotism illustrated most distinctly the characteristic result of the formation of a nation and constituted another reason why the history of the Mahrattas deserved special study. It was this force behind, which supported the efforts of the leaders and enabled them to dream of the possibility of the establishment of a central Hindu *padshahi* or empire at Delhi, uniting and controlling all other native powers. The history of the Mahratta power associated with the name of Shivaji is very properly called the history of the Mahrattas and not of a single heroic adventurer or dynasty.

Ranade's third proposition was that an important feature of the history of the Mahrattas had entirely escaped the observation of European writers. In his opinion, it constituted a very strong ground why the study possessed a peculiar, moral interest to the student of history. It was not a mere political revolution that stirred Maharashtra towards the close of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century. The political revolution was preceded and to some extent caused by a religious and social upheaval which moved the entire population. The popular idea that it was religious persecution which agitated Maharashtra and strengthened the hands of Shivaji and his comrades is not wholly wrong, but it represents only a partial truth. The Muslim rulers of the Deccan in the 15th and 16th centuries were not bigoted fanatics. Aurangzeb was undoubtedly a fanatic, but his fanaticism could not explain the rise of a power which struggled with him on equal terms and secured victory in the end. The fact was, Ranade pointed out, that like the Protestant Reformation in Europe in the 16th century, there was a religious, social and literary revival and reformation in India, notably in the Deccan in the 15th and 16th centuries. This religious revival was not Brahmanical in its orthodoxy. "It was heterodox in its spirit of protest against forms and ceremonies and class distinctions based on birth and ethical in its preference of a pure heart and of the law of love to all other acquired merits and good works. This religious revival was also the work of the people of the masses and not of the classes. At its heads were saints and prophets, poets and philosophers who sprang chiefly from the lower orders of society such as tailors, carpenters, potters, gardeners, shopkeepers, barbers and even Mahars, more often than Brahmans." The political leaders acted in concert with these religious leaders

of the people. Shivaji's chief adviser was Ramdas, who gave the colour to the national flag and introduced a new form of salutation which displayed at once the religious character of the movement and the independence of the spirit which prompted it. Ranade has emphasised that Shivaji claimed a direct inspiration for his activities from Goddess Bhawani and on great, critical occasions in his life, he always guided himself by what this inspiration suggested to him in moments of intense possession.

The fourth feature that Ranade has brought to the notice of the students of Mahratta history is that it is a history of confederated States. The central power was always weak after the death of its founder, Shivaji, who also was influenced in his arrangements by his national tendency. He had a council of eight ministers who were more than councillors, being themselves both civil and military leaders. Even in his life-time when he was a captive at Delhi and his country and his forts were in Mahomedan hands, this distribution of power helped him to raise his head soon after escaping from captivity. When his son, later on, was captured by Aurangzeb's general, the confederate leaders retired to the South and again on a suitable occasion returned and wreaked their vengeance on Aurangzeb. Under the Peshwas this system was developed still further by the establishment of the great camps of Mahratta captains at Indore, Gwalior, Dhar, Dewas, Baroda and Nagpur; the Bundelkhand Chiefs in Central India, the Patwardhan Chief in South India and the Satara *jahagirdars* like the Bhaves, the Rastes, the Dhulaps, the Angres, the Mahadiks, the Ghorpades and others had their smaller camps all along the eastern and southern boundaries of the Mahratta empire. These were so many centres of power and vitality and as long as they were animated by a common purpose and a central idea — and they continued to be so animated for nearly a century — their power was irresistible and even the disciplined British army had to dismember the Confederacy before they could succeed. For a hundred years there was not an expedition to the south or to the north, to the east or to the west, against the Rajputs or the Delhi emperors, in Rohilkhand or Oudh or Bengal, against Hyder or Tipu or the Nizam, against the Portuguese or the English in which the confederate chiefs did not act together. The ascendancy of the Peshwa was like the ascendancy of the Prussian monarchy in the German empire. The central authority represented more the idea than the force of the



Confederacy.

Ranade shows that as long as this tradition lasted, it enabled the ministers at Raigad, Satara, Vishalgad, or Poona to carry on the Government and direct the national force without the advantage of always having any strong personal ruler at the head. The Peshwa's Government under Nana Phadnavis was actually nicknamed the Barbhai Government, in the courts of Hyderabad and Shrirangapatan, which meant the Government of the joint council of 12 leaders. When the idea ceased to be respected, the Confederacy proved to be a source of weakness rather than of strength. The English knew this weakness and took advantage of it by appealing to the selfish vanity of each member of the Confederacy separately and thus loosened its joint force. Ranade has pointed out that there was no such experiment of federal government undertaken on such a large scale in this country under any sovereign, whether Hindu or Muslim. The experiment, however, was doomed to failure, for its presupposed virtues were not hereditary ; but as long as these virtues were extant, it had redeeming features of its own which are worthy of notice by every student of history.

The moral interest of the story is further heightened by the fact, as stated by Ranade, that the Confederacy arrangements enabled the Mahrattas to outlive and grow stronger from the very reverses they sustained during the critical periods of their history. There were four such critical periods : (1) When Shivaji became a prisoner at Delhi. (ii) When Sambhaji was taken captive and his brother Rajaram had to retreat to the south. (iii) When the battle of Panipat apparently destroyed all hopes of Mahratta ascendancy. (iv) When Narayanarao Peshwa was murdered and the ministers had to set aside Raghoba and carry on the administration with a house divided against itself and with the whole force of the British power to oppose. Ranade remarks that a nation that could stand four such reverses and catastrophies and overcome them, possesses an interest for the student of history which cannot be adequately measured by the length of time that the empire lasted. Ranade proceeded further to observe that about 30 millions of Mahrattas spread over the areas in Bombay, Vidarbha, and the various Indian States including the Nizam's represented a power that was second to none among the Indian communities and the Indian States. He also saw the vision of a federated India and a proper place for this power in it. His dream took over sixty years to materialise

since it was on May 1, 1960 that a State called Maharashtra was formed as a single federal unit of the Union of India with most of the Marathi-speaking areas brought under one political administration, on the ground that the Mahratta people would be better enabled to carry out the task of self-fulfilment by formulating suitable policies and devising concerted plans and thus securing a more efficient execution thereof, provincial and linguistic rivalries having been put an end to.

All this is true, but Shivaji's *swarajya* itself had to pass through a great crisis after his death. Shivaji was well aware of Aurangzeb's designs on the Deccan and the last twelve years of his life were devoted to the sole purpose of preparing his people to receive and repel the final blow. Forgetting old animosities, he persuaded Bijapur and Golconda to enter into defensive and offensive alliances with him and both these kingdoms profited by his help in repelling the attacks of the Moghul generals and consented to pay him tributes in recognition of his services. He appeared to have had prescience of coming events in view of his conquests and alliances and the new line of defence he formed in the Kaveri valley in Southern India. The hill forts along the Sahyadri ghats and mountain ranges were kept in a state of repair and his naval force was his second line of defence. Above all, the men he had trained by a long course of discipline to follow him wherever he led them and even to anticipate his wishes with unswerving loyalty and success, the spirit of independence he had roused in all classes and the faith he had inspired in them — these were the chief supports of the power which was, by the confession of friends and foes alike, supreme in Southern India. His death was as sudden as it was premature and he had no time to make proper arrangements for regulating the succession to his kingdom. His eldest son had grossly misbehaved, disobeyed his orders and had even gone over to the protection of Moghul generals. So, on his return from the Moghul camp he was kept a close prisoner at Panhala. With the help of the army Sambhaji succeeded in effecting his escape and overcoming the opposition of the ministers at Raigad, obtained possession of the throne. By his misrule and cruelties he alienated the sympathies of all who had risen to greatness under his father. Sambhaji was even more brave than his father and it seemed at one time that he would keep up the prestige of the Mahratta power in spite of his many shortcomings but the promise was not realised.



Anarchy prevailed everywhere and just at this time Aurangzeb with a big army determined to exterminate all the Hindu and Muslim kingdoms of Southern India. His army conquered Bijapur and Golconda within three years of his entry in the Deccan and Sambhaji was easily captured in a state of utter helplessness and subsequently beheaded with cruel indignity. Raigad itself was captured and his wife and son were taken as captives to Aurangzeb's camp.

The few years that followed Aurangzeb's stay in the Deccan till his death in 1707 were the most trying, the most critical for Rajaram and the loyal adherents of the Mahratta *raj*. Ranade describes their struggle to regain all lost glory as the Twenty Year's War of Independence. The loftiness of nomenclature is wholly deserved. Ranade has described their achievements as even more glorious than Shivaji's and with perfect justification. He then goes on to point out how order was brought out of chaos, after Shahu's release from Aurangzeb's custody and return to Satara, by Balaji Vishwanath whose last years, he said, were devoted to secure the recognition by the Delhi emperors of the rights of the Mahratta Confederacy to *swaraj*, *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* over the whole of the empire. "This acquisition gained to the Mahratta power that legitimacy in the absence of which it is not possible to distinguish power from force. This was the crowning work of Balaji Vishwanath's genius and though many others contributed to its success, this achievement must always be his principal claim to be regarded as next to Shivaji the principal founder of the Mahratta confederacy." Ranade died before he could finalise his notes on the progress of the Confederacy and we have only to content ourselves with the preface that he contributed to the selections from the Peshwa Daftar by Rao Bahadur Vad for his opinions on the decline of the Mahratta power as also its final fading out.

Ranade was neither a materialist nor a Marxist, but his evaluation of Shivaji's role in the process called 'rise of the Mahratta power' and the assessment of the various forces that contributed to that achievement will do credit to any materialist or Marxist. He has, first of all, drawn attention to the natural advantages of position and climate, geography and history and the separatist tendencies they gave rise to among the people of the hilly country of poor soil. He then goes on to point out that in consequence of these influences, at the commencement of the 17th century, the nominal Mahomedan rulers of Golconda, Bijapur, Ahmednagar

and Bedar were virtually controlled by Mahratta statesmen and warriors both in the civil and military departments and the hill forts near the *ghats* and the country around were in the hands of Mahratta *jahagirdars* who were only nominally dependent upon these Muslim sovereigns. It was when this slow process of national emancipation was being peacefully worked out that a new danger threatened the country in the attempts made by the Delhi emperors from Akbar to Aurangzeb to extend the Muslim power again to the south of the Narmada and the Tapti rivers. If successful it would have thrown back the country for another period of 100 years which had been the time that the Hindus had taken to reassert their independence after the first conquest.

This new danger was much more formidable as it was backed up by all the resources of the Delhi empire. The danger was felt to be formidable alike by the Mahomedan rulers of the Deccan and their Mahratta nobles. The separatist tendencies among the Mahrattas disabled them from facing the Moghuls in the open field and the hide-and-seek guerilla system of warfare adopted by the Mahratta armies as their characteristic tactics was under the circumstances unavoidable. The first shock of the Mahomedan invasion had been borne and surmounted and the country had during the last three hundred years shown considerable rallying power. The old system of playing the waiting game and allowing the Mahomedan rulers to dissolve themselves in luxury would not have served the purpose. The new danger required new tactics, but above all tactics, what was wanted was a new spirit, a common feeling of interest, a common patriotism born of a liberal religious fervour. The scattered power of the Mahratta chiefs had to be united in a confederacy, animated by a common purpose and sanctified by a common devotion to the country.

Shivaji's great achievement was, says Ranade, that he realised this danger, kept the separatist tendency under control, brought the common forces together in the name of a common religion and he thus represented in himself not only the power of the age, but the soul-stirring idea, the highest need and the highest purpose, that could animate the Mahrattas in a common cause. He did not create the Mahratta power; that power had been already created, though scattered in small centres all over the country. He sought to unite it for a higher purpose by directing it against the common danger. This was his chief achievement and his chief service to the country



and in this consists his chief claim upon the grateful remembrance of his people. It was not for nothing that the people looked up to him as their inspired leader. He felt the inspiration himself and communicated it to those about him, not only in one generation but for generations more to come after him till the idea of re-establishing Hindu power throughout the country was realised at once in the great centres or camps which the Mahrattas established in all parts of the Indian continent. Thus was the ground prepared partly by nature, partly by the ancient history of the country, partly by the religious revival, but chiefly by the long discipline in arms which the country had undergone under Mohamedan rule for three hundred years.

Ranade has mainly dealt with Shivaji's career in nearly half of the book. Another description of Shivaji by him also bears repetition. " Shivaji had the magnetic power which only true leaders of men possess and which neither bandits nor mad fanatics can ever claim. He attracted towards himself all that was hopeful and inspiring in the land without distinction of class or caste or creed or colour. His very councillors were selected from all the great communities which constituted the strength of the country. His touch made the very grossest of men feel the cleansing fire burning within them." Again, " Shivaji's self-discipline was as great as his power of control and his military daring. This characteristic of his nature stands out in marked contrast with the looseness and ferocity of those times. In the worst excesses committed by his armies under the stress of war and need of money, cows, women and cultivators were never molested. Women especially were treated with a chivalry unknown to his enemies. When captured in the chances of war, they were sent back to their husbands with all honours. .... Religious fervour, almost at white heat, bordering on the verge of self-abnegation, a daring and adventurous spirit born of a confidence that a higher power than man's protected him and his work, the magnetism of superior genius which binds men together and leads them to victory, a rare insight into the real needs of the times and a steadfastness of purpose which no adverse turn of fortune could conquer, a readiness and resourcefulness rarely met with either in Indian or European history, a true patriotism which was far in advance of the times and a sense of justice tempered with mercy — these were the sources of the strength that enabled Shivaji to sow the seeds of a power which accomplished in the hands of his successors all that he had planned out and enabled

his race to write a chapter in Indian history to some purpose.” His final summing up is contained in just one sentence at the end of the book which serves as a lesson for the Mahrattas of the present day in that it describes their strength and weakness at once. It is that they are ‘strong when confederate and unable to retain independence when the union is broken up’.

As has already been said, Ranade died before he was able to write the second volume of Mahratta history. But from his introduction to the Peshwa Diaries, it is not difficult to see what his views on the progress and fall of the Mahratta power were. As far as the first volume is concerned Ranade’s exposition and interpretation have been generally accepted by historians and research scholars as sound. Only in one respect, Rajwade who was a pioneer worker of great repute in the field of research of original documents, records and registers pertaining to the Mahratta period, could not see his way to agree with Ranade. He rejected Ranade’s thesis and held that he was not justified in stating that the teachings of the Mahratta saints and prophets were similar to the teachings of Martin Luther and others in Europe which went by the name of Protestantism. Rajwade argued that what Ranade called the religious revolution in Maharashtra was not the same which the term *Maharashtradharmā*, used by Ramadas, denoted and connoted. This term never had the connotation that Ranade ascribed to it. Religious beliefs of the people in the days of Shivaji were quite different from those that Ranade credited them with and would have his countrymen believe. Rajwade stated emphatically that the cult of devotion popularised by the saints was not a revolt against Sanatanis and it was never a cult of the fighting, militant type that Protestantism was. According to him, to say that the saints’ teachings influenced the Hindu mass mind in Maharashtra in favour of an equalitarian pattern of society and to add that they inspired the people to found a free State of their own was to see too much in that revolt, such as it was. Rajwade credited only Ramadas with having done something to rouse the people and thus actively aided Shivaji to bring about what may be called a psychological transformation and dismissed other saints as passive submissionists with their eyes always directed towards the other world. But even Rajwade revised his view later and conceded that the saints have contributed to the general awakening by inculcating qualities of self-respect and devotion to duty, thus conceding the substance



of what Ranade propounded.

Touching this subject in his review of *A History of the Mahratta People* by Kincaid and Parasnis, the late Prof. H. G. Limaye has elucidated satisfactorily what Ranade said about the saints and prophets and their work. Prof. Limaye emphatically refuses to associate himself with the view that the national movement in Maharashtra at the time of Shivaji was based upon religion. It has been reiterated and emphasised by Rajwade and Ranade seems to support it. The only supposition on which this view could be rendered tenable is that the religion of the Hindus was in danger at the time and to save that religion political independence was necessary. Such a hypothesis has no foundation in fact. The descriptions regarding religion being in danger as appearing in the writings of Ramdas are dismissed as propaganda by Prof. Limaye who says that Ramdas did not tell lies but generalised on insufficient data. In his opinion there is no evidence to prove that there was wholesale religious persecution or that the Hindus were so completely trodden down that no scope was left for their activities. On the contrary there was far more religious toleration in the south than in the north. The Mahomedans in the Deccan treated the Hindus with sympathy and depended to a great extent on their support. Hindus could and did take a distinguished part in the general administration. The whole of Maharashtra was studded with Hindu *mansabdars* and *jahagirdars* under Muslim rule. Hindus enjoyed considerable power and influence which created feelings of confidence and made it possible for them to think of political freedom. Prof. Limaye goes further and asserts that, "In the Maharashtra of Shivaji's time the need was felt not of the *power* of inaugurating a political revolution but of the *will* to do it". Finally he says, "There were two factors in the national movement of Maharashtra. That representing material power was contributed by the Mahratta nobles who opposed Shivaji in the first instance and the moral force of the movement was derived from the preaching of the saints while Shivaji stands for the synthesis of the two. Himself the son of a great Mahratta nobleman and as such possessed of power and influence, he was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the teachings of the saints. Inspired by their high ideals, he strove to realise them in his life and in doing so was prepared to risk both his power and position. That is the significance of Shivaji's life-work and it is this which entitled him to a rank by the side of the

greatest of the world's heroes." There is enough in Ranade's own writings to warrant the statement that had he been living he would have gladly approved of Prof. Limaye's interpretation.

Rajwade also did not accept Ranade's view that one of the important causes of the fall of the Mahratta power was the influence of caste. After 1760, the men who rose to power in the Deccan were all Brahmins, but before that year, eminent men from all castes held positions of power, trust and responsibility, says Ranade. In support of his view Ranade quoted the names of some Brahmin families like the Vinchurkars, Raje Bahadurs, Bhuskutes, Bundelles, Khers, Purandares, Panses, Binivales, Patwardhans, Mehendales, Gokhales, Rastes and others, who rose to power and prominence after the battle of Panipat in 1761. According to Ranade, from this time onwards, the weak points in the character of the rulers and the nation generally began to manifest themselves and the fall of the Mahratta power was hastened long before the British conquest in 1818. The policy of the later Peshwas was a departure from the principles laid down by Shivaji which were followed more or less by Rajaram and Shahu, according to Ranade. His introduction to the selections from the Peshwa Daftar made by Rao Bahadur Wad and another paper he wrote on "Currencies and Mints under Mahratta Rule" are enough to show his general trend of thinking. His conclusion was that the civil, criminal and revenue administration of the Peshwas compared favourably with that of the best Hindu or Mahomedan rulers of the time though it was wanting in the higher statesmanship of Akbar or Shivaji and it had the germs of its own dissolution implanted in it. "Its fall was doomed when it lost touch of these higher traditions and it had to fight the race of life with a stronger power. But for the time it lasted, the government of the country was wisely and honestly administered on the whole, excluding of course, the periods when internal dissensions disturbed the public peace. The hidden tendencies of the caste exclusiveness and sacerdotal pride began to manifest themselves and to this was joined an utter incapacity to realise the claims of a higher civilisation and to study the development of arts and sciences and the advantages of a liberal social polity and a purer religion. Our failure to realise this higher life brought on the final collapse long before any outside influences were brought to operate upon us."

Later writers on this subject have not entirely accepted Ranade's analysis. Tilak himself commented in the *Kesari* on these two



papers of Ranade and while welcoming his general approach as sound and scientific, he objected to the emphasis Ranade placed on the existence of caste and its disruptive influence on any co-operative effort, saying that caste has always been there with us for hundreds of years and Shivaji's own *swaraj* was achieved in spite of it. Caste did not also come in the way of the triumphs of Bajirao though he conceded that any dissension easily assumed the character of communal strife as soon as it arose. Later writers like N. C. Kelkar, G. S. Sardesai and others have also followed the Tilak line. Dr. Surendra Nath Sen and Jadunath Sarkar, however, accepted Ranade's line entirely and Prof. H. G. Limaye also appeared to agree with them. Ranade said that the break-up of the Council of Eight Ministers, the system of hereditary offices, the maintenance of mercenary armies in place of what might be called national militia of the days of Shivaji and Bajirao and fratricidal conflicts, besides the caste system, were the causes of the fall of the Mahratta power. In a centenary tribute paid to Ranade, D. V. Apte, a historical research scholar of repute has humbly but clearly shown that the hereditary offices of ministers existed even in the times of Sambhaji, Rajaram and Shahu. Ranade tried to make out that Government under Shivaji was a Government by Council, a counterpart of Government by the Governor-General in Council under the British. But according to Apte and others it is an over-statement of the true position. Shivaji was an autocrat, however enlightened he might have been, and his ministers had no recognised constitutional status. It was not necessary for Shivaji to consult them before taking decisions and whenever he did so it was merely in their capacity as departmental heads. It is difficult to conceive the ministers as having functioned as a council because several of them had military duties and they used to be absent on expeditions of long duration. Besides, the *Ashta Pradhans* were not instituted by Shivaji for the first time. They were there long before, at least many of the offices existed before and Shivaji is believed to have added one or two more to make them eight. The sentence in Ranade's writing to which exception has thus been taken on this point reads as : " If the Peshwas had continued true to the ancient Rajmandal while substituting themselves as the deputies of the hereditary Rajas, there was no reason why the great purposes served by the Rajmandal under Shivaji, Rajaram and Shahu might not have been fulfilled with equal success in the times of their

Brahmin ministers". Similarly, the story that Shivaji was against hereditary *vatans* is also not borne out by his several edicts to the contrary.

The University of Bombay has published in 1961 a volume containing all of Ranade's writings on Mahratta history with copious annotations by Professors R. P. Patwardhan, R. V. Oturkar and Dr. G. S. Ghurye. In his introductory remarks Prof. Patwardhan says, "His (Ranade's) writings on the constitutional and administrative aspects of Mahratta history have for the most part stood the test of time". It is only in a few particulars that later research has served to modify Ranade's views, such as Apte's regarding *Ashta Pradhans* and *Raj-Mandal*. He also takes exception to Ranade's likening the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* to the subsidiary system of Wellesley by observing that "there is this much resemblance between the two, that the Mahrattas in the one case and the British in the other were able to maintain an army at the expenses of other states. But the British system was far more regular and methodical than its Mahratta counterpart. The British really gave effective protection while the Mahrattas did not." Finally Prof. Patwardhan says, "It would appear that the roots of Chauthai, like those of Deshmukhi, go far back into the centuries; and that Chauthai was allowed as a special right when order was to be established in a certain territory. What Shivaji did seems, therefore, to have been to give a more extended application to an institution which he found to be existing already in certain localities."

Apte has also further pointed out that the rise to prominence of families of the Brahmins from the Konkan Coast was due to the fact that Brahmins from the Desh tract and also Maratha families were practically annihilated at Panipat. This rise of the Konkanastha or Chitpavan Brahmins was not necessarily due to communal favouritism on the part of the Peshwas who in any event had not favoured men of straw. They had only recognised merit and rewarded it. Whatever that may be, even Apte readily conceded that Ranade opened up the high road to the study of original documents of the Mahratta and Peshwa periods by his serious and objective and, therefore, correctly historical approach, even though he might have slipped into laying wrong emphasis on certain points here and there. A research scholar is necessarily a votary of truth and so he is ever ready to correct an error whether his own or of others. In Ranade, this attitude was never-failing and so had he lived



long enough he would have readily agreed to revise his own views, when conviction was carried to him and availability of more trustworthy and genuine material made such conviction imperative.

Whatever Rajwade, Tilak, Kelkar, Sardesai, Limaye, Potdar, Apte and Ranade himself have said about the causes of the fall of the Mahratta power, is not satisfactory or convincing because their explanations fail to go to the root. All the causes they mention are inadequate or in the nature of results of one ultimate cause viz. the backward social organisation of the Mahrattas. This has been reasoned out well by R. V. Nadkarni in his thesis *The Rise and Fall of the Mahratta Empire*. One of his concluding remarks is worth quoting here. He says, "If Indians had seen their way to coalesce socially like the Westerners we would have been long ago a great nation and the ideal of Akbar would have been realised in practice. National unity requires national sentiment and national integration is impossible unless the same is based on equality and social justice as between the different linguistic groups forming the union. We must create those social forces which would make us an enlightened community worthy of a great future. As Khare Shastri says, "The time has come when we should emulate the Westerners' example or remain slaves". But this depends upon our building up social institutions on the Western model as other Asian nations like Japan and Turkey have done. We must digest Western culture and evolve a modern social organisation or perish.

## XII

### HIGH COURT JUDGE

RANADE IS almost invariably and decorously referred to as Justice Ranade, but very little of his work, whether as a subordinate judge or a judge of the High Court, is widely known. Indeed, his work as a judicial officer is far less important than his achievements in other fields and it is only natural that his work as a judicial officer, should be chiefly known to the legal fraternity or the learned luminaries among them. Reference has already been made to the way in which he took his duties as a first class subordinate judge, small causes court judge and an administrator of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act and the distinction he achieved as a presidency magistrate in Bombay during the period of only three months that he occupied that office. His judgments as a subordinate judge were remarkable for patient and minute inquiry, exhaustive treatment of every case that came before him, careful examination of every document filed in it, lucid statements of facts, just appreciation of evidence, elaborate exposition of the various bearings of the question at issue and cogency of arguments adduced in support of the decisions finally arrived at and so they always won the admiration of the High Court. Chief Justice Sir Michael Westropp was once hearing an appeal from the court of Ranade when he observed that the writer of the judgment in the case was fit to sit by his side on the Bench of the High Court. After his retirement Sir Michael sent him a testimonial from England on November 15, 1884 saying : “During my acquaintance as Chief Justice of the High Court of Bombay with the Judgments of Mr. Ranade, which acquaintance extended over many years; those judgments showed greater ability and knowledge of law than those of any other subordinate judge during that time in the Presidency of Bombay. Mr. Ranade appeared to take pride in doing his work in a superior manner.”



Ranade's work as a High Court Judge mainly consisted in hearing appeals from the lower courts and pronouncing final verdicts on them, mostly jointly with some other judge of the High Court. The practice usually in that court is that the senior judge should deliver or dictate a decision after joint deliberation and in case of a difference of opinion, the differing judges should give separate judgments. Even in case of agreement as to the decision, different points and arguments may weigh with an individual judge and he may give a separate judgment. It is difficult, therefore, to make sure about certain judgments as exclusively Ranade's but there is sufficient internal evidence in some of them to warrant the belief that they are positively his. There is an authorised and official series of law reports of the High Court of Judicature of Bombay known as the Indian Law Reports, Bombay series. There are about 340 reported judgments of the Division Bench, consisting of two or more judges, in which Ranade sat. Out of these 156 are Ranade's. Some of these are concurring judgments and others independent judgments i.e. where his brother judges did not deliver a separate judgment. He was also a member of about 25 Full Benches consisting of three or more judges.

During the period of seven years that he sat on the High Court Bench, his work was highly appreciated by his colleagues. In his reference to Ranade's death, Sir Lawrence Jenkins said : "Ranade was a profound and sympathetic judge possessed of the highest perceptive faculties and inspired with an intense desire to do the right. His opinion was of the greatest value to his colleagues and his decisions will stand in the future as a monument of his erudition and learning." Ranade is not known as one of the most profound and brilliant of India's lawyers, but he is certainly known as one who placed the duty he was called to, above everything else. He showed great power in unravelling difficult cases and this reputation was maintained by him till his end. A remarkably distinguishing feature of Ranade's court work was the amount of care he bestowed on it. When an appeal came before him from a lower court, he used to read at home all the papers connected with it and he did not admit for hearing any appeal which obviously deserved to be summarily dismissed because it was only vexatious and preferred out of love for litigation. He was against, as it were, unnecessary waste of time and money. This was not the general practice of the judges. Ranade was not

quite popular with the junior members of the Bar who could not be expected to like his way of cutting down the High Court file by his conscientious manner of doing his work. It was only natural that Ranade should form at least a tentative opinion, in favour of or against, in every case that he read at home because of this practice of his, but he was never dogmatic about it and he was always ready to weigh the merits and demerits after hearing the lawyers on both sides. He was known to listen carefully and closely to arguments and then decide as he thought right. He carried home a number of books during the week-end and spent much time in consulting them in connection with the cases he had to consider.

Sir Narayan Chandavarkar succeeded Ranade as a High Court Judge, but before that he was a practising advocate and so had numerous occasions to appear before him. His experience in that capacity is quite illuminating and has an intimate touch about it. Referring to Ranade's habit of reading aloud and having things read to him aloud which stuck to him throughout life since his undergraduate days, Sir Narayan says, "I believe he was able to comprehend readily what he read when he read it aloud to himself. I used often to wonder whether he felt embarrassed on account of that habit when pleaders arguing before him cited to him cases, he could not read them aloud to himself as he had another judge sitting with him on the Bench. That he was not able to follow the cases cited under those circumstances became clear to those who practised before him. When he would retire into his chambers or to his house, he would read or have them read aloud and once so read, he could get to the very heart of the cases. There is an advantage in this habit of reading aloud — it is not only the mind but also the ears take in what you read and the impression caused by the reading aloud is strengthened."

Ranade's habit of making systematic summaries of what he read has been previously referred to. It is this habit, says Sir Narayan, which enabled him when he was on the High Court Bench to carry into his head the facts of the cases — a dozen or so — with which he had to deal almost every day. It was in important murder cases that his ready and powerful grasp of intricate facts showed itself at its best. Sir Narayan says, "A learned colleague of his who had sat for some years with Ranade and heard a large number of criminal appeals, wrote to me after Ranade's death that the latter had been



of great assistance to him in dealing with several complicated murder cases. Another English friend asked me how Ranade was able to carry into his head the facts of the cases he daily had argued before him. The fact is that Ranade had trained his naturally talented mind by constant reading and systematic summarising to take in facts and arrange them in his head in their proper proportion and order. Mere talent alone cannot help a man to do that unless it is disciplined. Ranade was naturally gifted but he did more for his mind than Nature had done for him."

The most important of his judgments related to Hindu law. Thus his decision in 21 Bombay, page 739 in the case, *Madhaorao vs. Dave Trimbakram* is considered important since Ranade was required to study the *Smriti* texts and exercise his independent judgment while giving his decision. It was referred to three years later in 24 Bombay, page 192 and on page 62, even the Full Bench declared it authoritative and followed it. The decision, in brief, is that Bai Mani being a *gotraja* and *sapinda* was entitled to enjoy her property only during her life-time and that it could not be regarded exclusively hers as *stridhan*.

The facts of the case are that Narottam and Harjivan were divided brothers. Narottam was the owner of the immovable property in dispute. Narottam who survived Harjivan, died childless, leaving behind him his widow Jasoda. To Bai Mani, Jasoda left the property in suit. Bai Mani in turn by will, bequeathed the property to defendants Nos. 5 and 6 who were *gotrajas* and *samanodakas*, being descendants of an ancestor of Narottam several degrees removed.

Ranade's judgment was: "The plaintiff was Harjivan's daughter's son, and as such relying chiefly on a caste custom, he brought his suit to recover possession of the two houses in respondent's possession. In this suit, plaintiff claimed to be Tulasidas' heir as *bandhu* in preference to respondents Nos. 5 and 6, who were distant *samanodaka* agnates. In the appeal before us appellant's pleader gave up the original contention by which he sought to establish his right over the property under a special custom, as *bandhu* heir of Tulasidas. It was urged that Bai Mani was the last full owner and the houses belonged to her as her *stridhan* acquired by inheritance and as such the appellant as *bandhu* of Tulasidas was heir to Bai Mani who died without issue.... By reason of this change of front it becomes necessary to inquire whether the property in dispute was Bai Mani's *stridhan*. Accepting the finding of the lower appeal court on the

point of the separation of interests, it is clear that Bai Mani succeeded to the property on Jasoda's death as a *gotraja, sapinda*, being the widow of the nephew of Narottam. A *gotraja, sapinda*, widow succeeding to any property under the circumstances stated above takes only a widow's interest in the property and has no absolute interest in the same as in her *stridhan* property proper."

It is clear that Bai Mani as a widow of a *gotraja sapinda* could not take the inherited property in dispute as her *stridhan* in the full sense so as to devolve it on her decease, to her heirs, in place of the heirs of the last male owner.

An important decision of his relates to maintenance of a Hindu widow in *Yamunabai vs. Manubai*, 23, Bombay, 60. A daughter-in-law claimed maintenance from the estate of her husband which was inherited by her mother-in-law after the death of the husband of the former and son of the latter. It was self-acquired property. The lower court opined that the father-in-law's duty was to maintain the daughter-in-law only morally and not legally and so he could not be obliged to do so. Ranade ruled that since the son's self-acquired property was liable to be regarded as ancestral property in the case of his heirs, it was legal that the daughter-in-law should be entitled to maintenance. He also held that due weight must also be attached to the fact that the son died before his father while all of them were living as a joint family. Ranade's words were : "The question of Hindu Law raised in this appeal is whether the widow of a predeceased son, who lived in union with his father has a legal right to claim maintenance from her mother-in-law when the latter succeeds as heir to her husband who left only self-acquired property at the time of his death. The moral obligation of the father-in-law is held to be converted into a legal obligation when his self-acquired property devolves upon his heirs. Under certain circumstances and in the hands of such heirs, such property is held liable to provide maintenance to the widow of a predeceased son of the person who acquired the property when such son lived in union with him.... If the son's widow has a claim for maintenance against the unobstructed rights of a full heir, it cannot be maintained that her rights are not equally valid against the mother-in-law, whose interest is admittedly of a more restricted character....The right of a female member to be maintained out of the estate prevails even against the king who succeeds to the estate by escheat....On the whole, we must hold that the respondent's right to claim



maintenance must be allowed as against the appellant, her mother-in-law, subject to the legal obligation of maintaining the widowed daughter-in-law whose husband was united in interest, with his father.”

Ranade held that a Hindu father's right to divide his property was absolute and a division once made could not be reopened by his sons, whether major or minor. Ranade gave this decision in the case of *Ganapat vs. Gopal*, reported in B. L. R. 1, page 123. Ranade made no distinction whatever between an uncle and a half-uncle i.e. a full brother and a half-brother of a father. The lower court had decided that a full uncle was more privileged than the half-uncle in a case pertaining to the Sardar family of Vinchurkars. He took this decision after properly consulting the commentaries like *Vidnaneshwar*, *Mayukha*, *Madanaparajata*, *Mitakshara* and others. While taking this decision he had to reject the verdict of the Allahabad High Court. It was authoritatively quoted in Bombay 53, page 194 and also previously in Bombay 24, page 563.

J. J. Parsons and Ranade ruled : “The arrangement made in 1875 was thus in every way fair and equitable, and it was acquiesced in as such by all the parties for over 12 years. The father in a Hindu family has a right when he so desires to make a partition, and it binds his grown up as well as minor sons....Such a family arrangement once made is final, and cannot be reopened on the ground of the inequality of the shares....The general rule of Hindu Law, as expounded by the *Mitakshara*, *Mayukha* and the *Smriti Chandrika*, is that a son born after partition has no claim on the wealth of his separated brother. He has a preferential claim on the wealth of his parents. He shall have a share of it with those brothers who live in union with the father, or were re-united with him. The separated brothers have no claim over this distributed parental share. A partition is limited to the interests of the persons demanding it, and has no enforced general operation against those who desire to live in union.”

Two of his decisions in regard to the validity of a Hindu marriage are noteworthy. They were arrived at after a careful consideration of the injunctions of the *smritis* and social convenience. In *Bai Divali vs. Moti Karson*, 22 Bombay 509, Ranade gave the verdict in appeal that in accordance with the principle of *factum valet* the marriage of a girl arranged by her mother and duly gone through should be regarded as valid, although a lower court had held it

illegal because it was arranged contrary to specific instructions of the *girl's father*, the instruction being that it should be arranged under the guidance and direction of the girl's maternal uncle. Ranade said, "On the whole, we feel satisfied that the marriage of the minor did take place as stated by these witnesses.... If the evidence was sufficient to prove the performance of some ceremonies usually observed on such occasions, a presumption is always to be drawn that they were duly completed, until the contrary was shown.... Bai. Divali was, no doubt, guilty of disobeying the order of the District Judge ; but neither that circumstance by itself, nor the disregard of the preferable claim of the male relations would invalidate the marriage. Even where the dispute was between husband and wife, the doctrine of *factum valet* was allowed to prevail."

In the other case, a daughter's marriage was arranged and performed without her father's knowledge and consent. He was not present to perform the *Kanyadan* even though living. Ranade in his verdict says that the injunction of the *smritis* that a father should give his daughter in marriage was only directory and not mandatory. Once the marriage was performed, the fact of the performance could not be set aside by a hundred law books. Ranade obviously took the commonsense view and did not care for the letter of the law. This case is known as *Mulchand Kuber vs. Budhia* in *Bombay 22*, page 812. Ranade said : "The distinction between directory and prohibitory injunctions being so clear, we have next to see how far the authority of the father to give his girl in marriage falls under one or the other class of injunctions. The decided cases to which the reference was made in the course of the argument leave no doubt on this point." The next case in *Bellusis Reports* is more to the point. There, as here, the dispute was between husband and wife and the girl was only three years old when her mother got her married. The court held that a duly solemnised marriage could not be set aside on the ground that the father did not give his consent to the marriage.... This was also the view taken by the *Calcutta High Court* where also the mother's right to dispose of a minor child was questioned by the uncle of the child on the authority of the *smriti* texts, which gave preference to such relations over the mother in this connection.... But in the absence of these elements (of force and fraud) the maxim of *factum valet* will govern, as the texts only refer to the greater or less eligibility of the relations



who can claim the right to make the choice and perform the ceremony.

Many an appeal concerning adoption came up before Ranade as a High Court Judge and his decisions in that behalf have always been regarded as authoritative since he placed them on record. In *Vasudeo vs. Ramchandra* in Bombay 22, page 551, he had to consider a matter which concerned inheritance and adoption. The case briefly is that a daughter-in-law named Savitri adopted a son after her father-in-law's (Vishnu) property had already passed on to his daughters who were her sisters-in-law. Her husband was already dead and that is why the daughters, his sisters, became heirs. The daughter-in-law pleaded while justifying the adoption that her sisters-in-law had consented to the adoption and consequently the properties must revert to the adopted son. Ranade ruled that the question of the consent of the sisters-in-law did not arise, since they had no right to accord any such consent and whereas her husband had not become an heir to his father's property during his lifetime, she had no right to adopt a son after his death. This ruling was held as authoritative and definitive in Bombay 23, page 327 and Bombay 29, page 410. Ranade said, "I agree with Mr. J. Candy in holding that the adoption of the respondent-plaintiff is invalid for the double reason that Savitri had no power to adopt as she was not the widow of the last male-holder, and the nearest heirs, the daughters of the deceased Vishnu, are not proved to have given their consent to the divesting of the estate which had come to them by inheritance, in favour of Savitri the respondent....At the time the adoption took place, six months after Vishnu's death, his property had become invested in his daughters as his sole heirs, and Savitri had only a right to maintenance. Her adoption of the respondent-plaintiff could not, therefore, be the property of the last male-holder.....Mere presence of the daughters at the ceremony, and the absence of any objection, might imply an acquiescence, but it has been ruled that mere acquiescence is not equivalent to consent....On the whole, I feel satisfied that the adoption in this case was void for want of legal power in the adoptive mother, Savitri, to make a valid adoption and that this defect was not cured by the consent of the real heirs."

In *Ramachandra Bhagwan vs. Moolji Nanabhai* in Bombay 22, page 458, Ranade decided that if a widow adopted a son in order to continue the line of her husband, that is to say, for his spiritual

well-being by providing for his *shraddha* being performed and oblations being offered to his departed soul, no other possible objects behind the act need be taken into consideration. This decision indicates the respect in which Ranade held the tenets of Hindu Dharma Shastra, he said : “The widow of a separated house-holder, who adopts a son to continue the line of her husband, performs this act under an express or implied authority from her husband, and presumably her exercise of this right, independently of the wishes of reversionary heirs, must be as free as if the husband himself effected the adoption....These decisions virtually leave but little scope for an investigation into the motives which may possibly influence the widow to effect an adoption....On the whole, therefore, both on the grounds of analogy and principle, it seems to me that, in Western India in the case of a widow of a separated Hindu adopting a son to continue the line of her husband, any discussion of the adopting widow’s motives, is irrelevant and that if the act can be referred to proper religious motives, the court ought to presume that she was influenced by these motives and not by caprice.”

Ranade once discussed the *dwamushshayana* form of adoption and its validity in the case *Krishna vs. Paramashree*. Ranade held that even if a mother gave her only son in adoption to another woman, he continued to be the son of both the mothers and it was justifiable and rightful, because in keeping with the principles of the Hindu Dharma Shastra, he said : “It may be noted that even when the courts were not disposed to favour the adoption of an only son, an exception was always made in respect of the validity of the ‘*dwamushshayana*’ form of adoption of an only son. It has been always regarded as an unblamable form.... Now that the decisions have established the fact that the gift of an only son is not blamable, the implied effect ceases to be operative, and no restriction can be placed on the widow’s power to make a valid gift of an only son....Nanda Pandita has indeed remarked that the gift of an only son is limited to the case of two brothers, but the ‘*Dattakamimansa*’ and ‘*Dattaka Chandrika*’ alike lay down that the *dwamushshayana* form of adoption is not confined to brothers but is general in its application....On the whole, therefore, it appears to us that no objection can be taken to the validity of the adoption in this case,...because the recent rulings, which make the gift of an only son valid in the case of the father, naturally



justify a similar presumption of validity where the gift was made by the widow; and also because the power of making the *dwamu-shshayana* adoption is not confined to brothers only but their widows may also give and receive in adoption an only son."

In *Gopal vs. Vishnu* in Bombay 23, page 161, Ranade held that even if an adopted son is older than the adopting mother, the adoption was quite valid. He conceded that the *Smritis* recommended a younger adoptee than the mother but he held that it was only a recommendatory direction meant for general guidance and therefore not obligatory. A mother presumably might think that a grown-up person was more suitable if he was otherwise satisfactory. This view of Ranade was adopted as valid by the Cawnpore and Calcutta High Courts also. He said: "As regards the earlier *Smriti* texts, there seems to be no definite rule laid down on the point. The inference in favour of the adopted son being younger than his adoptive father, is extended to another by a somewhat loose analogy and interpretation of the text that the adopted son should be the reflection of a legitimate son. But in a system of law where bachelors and widowers are permitted to adopt, and where minors also can adopt, if they have arrived at the age of discretion, and where, further, married men with children have been held to be fit subjects for adoption, these strict interpretations of the old texts seem to be not a little out of place....If a male person at any time of life may adopt a man of any age, and such male person is also permitted to marry a female minor of any age, it is obvious that the rule prescribing a difference of age in favour of an adopting mother must be only regarded as a directory rule and not a command, the infraction of which invalidates the adoption."

A peculiar significance attaches to these various adoption case decisions by Ranade, because it was believed that Ranade's personal opinion was against the system of adoption altogether and he was of the view as a social reformer that a propertied person, dying without any issue, should bequeath his property in trust for social and public purposes and regard that as a more meritorious act than that he should adopt a son to perpetuate his family line. It was also the view of the *Kesari*, which in its very first year (1881) wrote a series of five articles on adoption. These articles are attributed by some to Tilak, by others to Agarkar and one reliable source is known to hold that they were Vaman Shivram Apte's. It is more reasonable to conclude that the views expressed were the

composite expression of opinion of all the three of them and even others of the Tilak-Agarkar group, though there is overwhelming internal evidence to induce one to take the view that Tilak is the real author both of the language and the content. Mrs. Ramabai Ranade adopted her nephew Narayan as her son after Ranade's death and she had his permission to do so formally if she thought it fit to do so, because he was brought up by them as their own son and in any case as a nephew he would have become a lawful heir later on. Ranade's misfortune was that he was not able to practice some of the reforms he preached and abolition of adoption might be considered one of them. Similar was the case of the late Rao Saheb V. N. Mandlik. He too wrote against it in his book on Hindu Dharma Shastra, but adopted a son in his own life-time, since he had no natural son.

All special land tenures have now been abolished and so Khoti also is a matter of history, but once upon a time, a number of people from Ratnagiri and a few from the southern parts of Kolaba Districts enjoyed the Khoti tenure and laid great store by it. Khots were petty landholders who brought fallow land under cultivation by settling peasants on it and collected revenue for the Government. The necessity for this arose because the land reclaimed from the hills or the sea was virgin and needed to be rendered arable; for this service they enjoyed certain privileges. There were several villages in these two districts where Khoti prevailed. In 1880, the Khoti Settlement Act was passed and the Khots were sought to be brought under legislative and executive control. Survey settlement officers were appointed. Their measures infringed the time-honoured rights of the Khots. They filed suits against Government for illegal action. One such suit came before Ranade in appeal. He ruled against the complainant in Bombay 18, page 244. But since questions of principle were involved, the case was again examined by a full bench of which Ranade was also a member. Having an open mind and always disposed to give a fair deal, Ranade revised his own previous decision whereby he had held the recorded entries by the survey settlement officer as conclusive and final. Ranade withdrew his words and admitted that they were inadvertently used and placed on record that the High Court had the right to reverse the decisions of the survey officer and record of classification of lands. This he did in agreement with the other judges (21 Bombay 480). The revised decision was : " This



examination would have been unnecessary, if we were of opinion that the Settlement Officer's entries in respect of tenure were final and conclusive. In this connection, there can be no doubt that in the last but one sentence in paragraph 6 of the judgment, the words "conclusive and final" were inadvertently used for "binding" under certain circumstances. The entries are admissible in evidence, but not conclusive or final. This correction does not affect the real point decided in the case and there is thus no conflict between the views of the two division benches on the point."

In two other cases concerning Khoti rights, Ranade gave very firm decisions. They are recorded in Bombay 1, page 19 and held the field as long as Khoti existed. The point at issue was whether trees like teak and *shisav* in privately owned Khoti lands were or not absolute property of the Khot. By the Dunlop proclamation of 1824 Government acknowledged the trees as his absolute property but in 1851 another proclamation was made whereby the gift was revoked. Ranade ruled that according to the Land Revenue Code, Section 214, rule 89 (1886-89) Government was not entitled to make the second declaration. A gift given once could not be withdrawn without the consent of the donees, the Khots. The Khots were owners of the land and their possession was absolute. They were not mere farmers paying rent to Government. This decision was discussed once again in Bombay 46, page 20, and upheld. The cases which afforded Ranade opportunity to give these decisions are known as Secretary of State *vs.* Narayan and Secretary of State *vs.* Sitaram cases. Ranade said, "In these appeals which were heard together, the only question to be considered is whether Government which was plaintiff in both cases, was the sole owner of the teak trees in dispute....On the whole we feel satisfied that the District Judge was right in holding that the respondent Khots were entitled to claim a proprietary right in the trees growing in their Khoti Khasagi lands, and that the seignorial rights of Government to teak trees were relinquished in 1823, and that relinquishment could not be rescinded by any subsequent proclamation like that of 1851 or notification of 1885."

In a case known as Mahipat *vs.* Lakshman, Bombay 2, p. 228, Ranade gave the decision that Section 120, Schedule II of the Limitation Act cannot interfere with the Khot's rights over his lands. A survey settlement officer registered a tenant as a permanent tenant under Section 20 of the Khoti Act. The

tenant took advantage of this and succeeded in getting a lower court to decide in his favour to secure possession of land. The Khot appealed for possession of the land. Ranade ruled that the tenant does not become a permanent tenant simply because a survey settlement officer registered him wrongly as such. The tenant himself acknowledged that he was not the owner. He was only a *saldar* or annual tenant and he used to pay rent to the appellant. The change in the register was made without the knowledge of the Khot and since it was not known to him, the Limitation Act, Section 120 was not operative on him. Ranade said: "It is a disclaimer for a yearly tenant, when he claims to be a *mirasi* or permanent tenant, and such a disclaimer need not necessarily be made to the landlord himself. In a suit where the defendant claimed to be a 'makta' tenant as against the plaintiff who sued him for that, and the defence failed, notice to quit was held not necessary.... As regards the survey officer's decision, it was contended by the respondent that the suit was not in time as it was being brought more than six years after the date of the decision, viz. 15th April, 1890. There is an entry in Exhibit 97, dated 15th April 1890, to the effect that the defendant was an occupancy tenant. There is, however, nothing to show that the 'Khots' against whom that decision was passed had knowledge of the date fixed for the inquiry....and appellants came to know of the decision in 1883 when the *botkhat* was prepared and finally signed. The suit is within six years from that date."

In one more case, *Dattatraya vs. Ramchandra Vishnu*, Ranade ruled that it was clearly *ultra vires* for a Settlement Officer to investigate, determine and register Khoti rights. J. J. Parsons and Ranade said: "All, therefore, that the survey officer is bound to record is the cosharers of the 'Khoti' and the extent of the interest of each, and he is authorised to investigate a dispute as to this matter only....This being so, the law nowhere gives the survey officer authority to investigate and determine the title of persons to whom no share of the 'Khoti' has been transferred either absolutely or conditionally, but who claim as mortgagees only a share of the khoti, still less can he decide whether any of these alleged mortgages have been redeemed or are still subsisting ...and the decision of the survey officer is in excess of his powers, and must be, treated as a nullity, and not as a decision under the Khoti act binding on them. Under the general law applicable to declaratory



suits, time will not run until the right to accrues.”

Ranade had occasion to record judgments in regard to the principle, *res judicata*, in *Lakshman vs. Amrit*, B.L.R. 2, pages 386 to 393. Ranade said : “ Under Section 137 of the Civil Procedure Code, the Court of first instance had the right to send for the record of its own motion, or on the application of any of the parties to the suit and inspect the same. Of course this section does not empower the court to use in evidence any document which would be inadmissible under the Indian Evidence Act. As stated above, no objection was made on behalf of the respondent-defendants 2 and 3, though in their appeal to the District Court, they raised the point that the documents were not relevant evidence, and the judgment and dispositions should not have been admitted as evidence. The Lower Appellate Court upheld the objection raised about the admissibility of this evidence, but this it could not do under the circumstances stated above.... As regards the judgments in the former suit, the appellant’s contention was that the judgments operated as *res judicata*. This court of first instance took this view, but the Lower Appellate Court held that they were not *res judicata*, and were not even relevant evidence. There can be no doubt that the lower court was right in holding that they were not *res judicata*, because the decision was not ‘inter partes’ though it related to the same subject-matter; but while the lower court was right so far, it was wrong in holding that these judgments were not admissible in evidence.”

In *Jagjivan vs. Bai Amba* in B.L.R. 3, page 47, he and Justice Crowe gave a judgment on adverse possession. He said, “ If the property was joint, the burden of proving exclusive adverse possession must rest on the defendant, who claims to be Dullhaba’s heir and devisee....In the case of a joint family, where no partition was proved, the mere fact that, two of the brothers, Kalian and Vallabh, went to live in a neighbouring Gaikwadi village, would not make the possession of Dullabh, who continued to live in the village of Vehrel necessarily adverse....Possession to be adverse must be shown to be continuous, public and adequate to the circumstances of the case. As between brothers, especially when no partition is proved, the adverse possession of one must be proved by more satisfactory evidence than it has been done in this case.”

The doctrine of adverse possession was further developed by judges who succeeded Ranade on the Bench, but he must be regarded

as having laid the foundation of that doctrine. It is needless to say anything about his impartiality and strictly judicial attitude because that was not a pose specially taken to function as a judge, but his very nature. This was particularly put to test when cases arising out of the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1893 came before him. The fact of his being a Hindu never gave room for the suspicion that his judgments were affected by that consideration. Similarly, mere popular sentiment did not weigh with him when he had to deal with appeals arising out of the events that followed the murder of Rand in the plague days in Poona in 1897. As a matter of fact he became the subject of much adverse comment when he refused release on bail to Tilak, in his first sedition case, because he in agreement with Chief Justice Parsons did not see sufficient ground for granting the application made by the late Mr. Joseph Baptista. This comment became all the more adverse because Justice Badruddin Tyabji granted bail a few days later.

Judicial officers are normally expected to conform to the letter of the law of the land, especially when they are codified as in the case of the penal laws and the procedures connected with them. But considerable discretion was left to them when they had to give decisions regarding matters affecting Hindu social life. Even in the case of codes, judges do take the liberty of going behind the printed word and tracing the motive behind while giving decisions in intricate and difficult cases. Ranade did not take such liberty except while dealing with Hindu law cases, but even then his effort was to interpret reasonably and impartially the original texts. He studiously refrained from introducing his social reform views in his judgments. Whenever departure from texts became irresistible he had recourse to British legal principles. The High Court of Bombay is held to have done most to liberalise Hindu law in matters like the recognition of the rights and status of women, and Ranade, as previously Telang, is regarded as having played an important part in this process. In the opinion of many leading jurists, his judgments read like learned discourses on Hindu social polity because they are replete with the exposition of the *Shruti*, *Smriti*, *Purana* and historical references and their co-ordination with English judgments. Conscientiousness was the hall-mark of his work as a judge as of every other work.

A story related by Mrs. Ramabai Ranade in her book of reminiscences may be repeated here without any apology. It illustrates



how conscientiously and singlemindedly Ranade applied his attention to his court work on specific occasions. It was in the month of June, 1900, when the new session of the High Court had begun after the summer vacation. Ranade was keeping indifferent health, yet on a Sunday, he devoted his whole morning to reading papers of a case and underlining certain passages in the various law books he had brought with him. After his lunch he told his wife that he had some very important work to attend to and so he should not be disturbed by anybody. He also asked a peon to be seated at the door of his closed room to prevent anybody from going in. Mrs. Ranade made all arrangements as required but after about four hours she herself went in with tea and fruits. He asked her not to speak a word and leave him immediately without taking his eyes off his work. Ramabai instantly left him. About an hour later she was called in and asked to produce whatever she wanted to offer by way of tiffin. While he was doing justice to the eatables and tea, a peon of the Prarthana Samaj came with a message that Ranade would be required to perform the service that evening. Ramabai was put out by this impertinence. She was annoyed that her husband who had spoiled his Sunday by devoting about ten hours to official work should again be requisitioned for a public service without due notice. But Ranade pacified her and told her to get ready to go with him. As they drove to the Prarthana Samaj Mandir, Ranade told his wife that he was dealing with an important murder case in which six Brahmins from Dharwar were involved. The other judge who had heard the case with him did not agree with his opinion but he would acquiesce in Ranade's opinion and so asked him to write the judgment. As a result of the pains Ranade had taken, two of the accused were saved from the gallows and sentenced to transportation for life. But Ranade paid a heavy price for this service. Due to his constant sitting, he did not even rise to ease himself when the call came and so developed kidney trouble. That kept him troubling from time to time and eventually the complications that arose out of it killed him within a few months. The trouble started in June 1900 and he died in January 1901.

Mrs. Ranade has described Ranade's routine since his appointment as High Court Judge in the same book. He would rise shortly after 3 in the morning, but lie meditating upon God till about 4.

Then he would sit up in bed and sing devotionally some *abhangs* of Tukaram or Namdeo. This would continue till about 5. He would then recite some Sanskrit psalms and *shlokas* and at 5-30 he would leave his bed. Then followed his morning ablutions and by 6 he would be seated on a sofa in the drawing-room to start his day. He would look up the morning newspapers and attend his mail. At 9-30 he would have his bath and after that his breakfast. For an hour or so he would talk to the people of his household and by 10-30 start for the High Court in his horse-carriage. The Court sat from 11 to 5. There was a tiffin interval for an hour. One of the servants of his household would take a hot tiffin to Ranade every day. After that he would rest for a while in his easy chair before starting work again. At 5 p.m. the court used to rise. It was his practice to walk two or three miles by the sea-side, when his carriage would proceed along with him. He used to reach home at six and talk to his people for half an hour and again plunge himself in work, answering letters and reading. Having a bad eyesight, he had always a reader with him. Gokhale once said that he wrote 20 letters a day on an average and many of them used to be quite discursive and lengthy. After the evening meal, he looked into the progress of his nephews and nieces, inquired after the elderly ladies of the family and went upstairs. He used to read until he fell asleep. On holidays, his house was always thronged with people who came on some business or other. He received them all without distinction and Ramabai was amused to see how skilfully he disposed of all of them according to their deserts. He encouraged the worthy among them to do some work or other of public utility and made everybody feel that he was their patron and patriarch.

The *Indian Law Reporter's* tribute to Ranade as a Judge is perhaps the most accurate and authoritative, being an expert's opinion, and no apology need be made for quoting a rather lengthy extract from it. The *Reporter* said : " No more important function falls to the lot of an Indian Judge than that of ascertaining and applying the personal law of the various communities which inhabit this country. The whole system of modern Hindu Law is thus a superstructure raised on old foundations to which every Judge, who has sat on the High Court Bench, has contributed his mite. Mr. Justice Ranade's contribution to this branch of Indian Judiciary law has been both solid in quality and large in quantity. His great



*forte* was his intimate knowledge of life in the mofussil. A Judge who administers Hindu Law has not merely to consider whether a particular rule can be deduced from old texts and commentaries but also to satisfy himself that it has been accepted as law by the current usage of the people. And who could speak with higher authority on this usage than Mr. Justice Ranade? Thus on the question of adoption by a widow, who had not removed her hair, or the adoption by her of her brother's son, or of a son older than herself, or the right to recognition as regenerate classes of castes that claimed to be so, his opinion of what daily practice had made current, was almost conclusive. However, he never professed to formulate a rule of law on his own authority. Before deciding any question, he took pains to collect all former precedents he could lay his hands on and find for himself everything that had been written on the subject by competent authorities. His judgments were, for this reason, repertories of all such material, and often summarised its effect in a series of propositions, clear, accurate and comprehensive. It was characteristic of him that he aimed at reconciling all apparently conflicting decisions and deducing a rule which covered them all.

“The same traits of character disclosed themselves when he had to decide on questions of fact. His anxious care on these occasions, was to inform himself of the contents of every document and the deposition of every witness that might have any bearing on the point he had to decide and his conclusions on the evidence were always accepted by his colleagues on the Bench, and by the Bar, as full of sound sense and as evincing a careful, penetrating and unerring analysis of the evidence.

“The High Courts in India have always maintained such higher character for an impartial administration of justice that it is hardly praise to say of an individual Judge that he discharged his duties with scrupulous impartiality. But on those rare occasions when whole communities are roused by some great passion or extraordinary incident, a Judge who, as a member of the community, breathes the atmosphere of passion and prejudice by which he is surrounded is hard put to it to escape the general infection. Two such occasions presented themselves while Mr. Justice Ranade sat on the Bench, one in 1893 and the other in 1897. But it is needless to say that they found him as impassive and as irresponsible to the feelings and prejudices of the hour as the interests of strict justice

could at any time require. This intellectual aloofness could not be put to better test than it was in the days which followed the Bombay riots and the Poona murders.

“Mr. Justice Ranade’s wide learning, his knowledge of the social and economic condition of his country, and his clear and comprehensive grasp of measures and events, stood him in good stead when as a High Court Judge he had to advise Government on any new piece of legislation. His views on these occasions commanded, as they deserved, universal respect and, on at least one occasion, were adopted wholesale by his colleagues.

“It goes without saying that Mr. Justice Ranade’s relations with the Bar were of the most cordial. He always informed himself from the papers placed before him of the general merits of a case before he heard arguments. Those who practised before him had in consequence to meet preconceived opinions and expect inconvenient questions. But he always kept an open mind and made no difficulty about changing his view when he saw the reason for it. For all that he had the courage of his convictions and not seldom differed from his colleagues on the Bench. As his final conclusions were formed after mature deliberation and independent consideration of all that could be said on either side of a case, they were generally expressed in separate judgments and, when so expressed, they seldom changed. Taken all in all, Mr. Justice Ranade was a most painstaking, conscientious Judge, who attacked all questions with a will and was least fettered by technicalities, who heard everybody with patience and attention and never shrank from giving expression to what he thought and judged. He never shirked a question or evaded an argument. He was born to work and he boldly fought his way to the truth and justice of every matter which came before him for adjudication.

“In a word, if it be the primary duty of a judge to do justice according to law, as between suitors in the immediate case before him; if it be a duty hardly second to it to satisfy parties that they have been fairly heard, these duties were hardly better fulfilled. If it be a grace to a Judge to be patient and courteous, that grace was his; if it be an ornament that he should express the law in clear and lucid terms, that ornament was his. Ruskin has eulogized the English Judge as ‘the highest type of intellectual and moral power that Christendom possesses’ and we can faithfully apply these words to this illustrious Judge whose death we deplore.”



### XIII

## POLITICIAN AND STATESMAN

THE WORDS, politician and statesman, are treated as synonyms in the dictionary. Yet, in practice, different shades of meaning have attached themselves and been ascribed to the two terms. A politician in India is usually understood to be an organiser and an agitator for a particular political or administrative reform or removal of a popular grievance. He is usually supposed to be dealing with the present and so tends to be short-sighted and even sordid; he may not be very particular about the means to be employed for the achievement of certain ends, in current, practical matters and so it is not unusual for him to give in, not only on details but even on principles. When politics is stigmatised, in proverbial parlance, as the last refuge of a scoundrel, the sting is aimed at the selfish, careerist, opportunist politician. But the agitator-politician and the administrator-politician, having to deal with current, day-to-day, practical matters can also be clean, conscientious and principled people, even though they have to fight elections, thump the tub and adhere to partisan attitudes. A statesman is distinguished from all such politicians, in that, besides being concerned with the present, he is not unmindful of the past and has his eyes always turned towards the future. He does not surrender principles at any cost, is anxious to conform to theory, takes long-range views, exercises caution and is necessarily constructive. A statesman has even to have attributes of a prophet, though he may not exactly be a prophet. He must have far-sight and foresight, depth and width of vision and a certain aloofness from mundane matters of mankind.

Ranade was a combination of all the three — politician, statesman, prophet — without ever having any of the possible blemishes of a politician. His functioning in all these roles was faultless. He is rightly remembered as one of the most prominent of the

founders and promoters of the Indian National Congress but long before the Congress was founded, Ranade had started his work of political education of the people, first as a writer in the columns of the *Induprakash* and later in the journal of the Sarvajanik Sabha. In these writings he has functioned in all these roles. He has dealt with questions of current or immediate importance, criticised administrative measures and departmental actions, suggested improvements for the time being and advocated far-reaching reforms. Here he has functioned as a public man, a publicist, an agitator-politician, though, of course, the form of agitation is very, very moderate and mild. In some of these writings and the public utterances he made from time to time, he has functioned as a far-seeing statesman, a profound thinker and a fervent patriot, anxious to see that the land of his birth and his fellow-countrymen prepared themselves to take up their legitimate and honoured places in a well-evolved world. He had the prophetic vision of his country being the true land of promise. In an inspired moment he once proclaimed : “I profess implicit faith in two articles of my creed. This country of ours is the true land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race. It was not for nothing that God has showered his choicest blessings on this ancient land of Aryavarta. We can see His hand in history. Above all other countries we inherit a civilisation and a religious and social polity which have been allowed to work their own free development on the big theatre of time. There has been no revolution and yet the old condition of things has been tending to reform itself by the slow process of assimilation. The great religions of the world took their birth here and now they meet again as brothers prepared to welcome a higher dispensation which will unite all and vivify all. India alone among all the countries of the world, has been so favoured and we may derive strength of inward hope from such a contemplation.”

In another such moment he pronounced : “The end is to renovate, to purify and also to perfect the whole man by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of duty and perfecting all his powers. Till so renovated, purified and perfected, we can never hope to be what our ancestors once were — the chosen people to whom great tasks were allotted and by whom great deeds were performed. Where this feeling animates the worker, it is a matter of comparative indifference in what particular direction



it asserts itself and in what particular method it proceeds to work. With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly to all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated and lastly with a love that overleaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the goal to be reached. Happy are they who see it in distant vision, happier those who are permitted to work and clear the way on to it, happiest they who live to see it with their own eyes and tread upon the holy soil once more. Famine and pestilence, oppression and sorrow, will then be myths of the past and the gods will then again descend to this earth and associate with men as they did in times which we now call mythical."

It was such lofty idealism that actuated Ranade to work in all fields. He did not work on temporary impulse, but had well-formulated plans and well considered ideas when he put his hands to any task, small or big. Thus he asked himself what the functions of a State or Government were or should be and after making up his mind about them he proceeded to state his expectations of them in the name of his people. "The state, after all, exists," he said, "only to make individual members composing it nobler, happier, richer, and more perfect in every attribute with which we are endowed; and this perfection of our being can never be insured by any outside arrangement, however excellent, unless the individual member concerned is himself prepared in his own private, social sphere of duties to co-operate in his own well-being." Thus he invests the State with paternal duties and thus makes the citizens subservient to the State. Out of this thought naturally comes the corollary that citizens must give implicit obedience to law for the maintenance of peace and order, which is the prerequisite of all progress. Since the British Government professed to preserve peace and maintain law and order, in any event, loyalty to it became inevitable in his scheme of things. But he was not satisfied only with this much. His conception of the State was far broader and higher. He did not merely want a police State, but he wanted a welfare State. Therefore, he said, "The state is now, more and more recognised, as the national organ for taking care of national needs in all matters in which individual and co-operative efforts are not likely to be so effective and economical as national effort.

This is the correct view to take of the true functions of a state. To relegate them to the simple duty of maintaining peace and order is really to deprive the community of many of the advantages of the social union."

As in his economic thinking, so in his political thinking, Ranade was not a votary of individualism. In fact the position he took as an economist was a corollary of his political faith. In his view, society must take precedence over the individual. Human need for collective life gave, in his opinion, to society both moral and political priority. He believed in the organic unity of the State, but this unity was not a fact apart from the individuals who constituted the State. He, therefore, considered that social and economic reform were quite proper fields for state activity. He thought that such parts of individual and collective life as could be well regulated by the citizens themselves without State control might be left to individual and group effort, but where private effort was hampered by social restrictions or where it was likely to be jejune and harmful, the State must step in and put matters right. These ideas were behind all his proposals of administrative, political and constitutional reforms. He was an ardent patriot and a nationalist and believed firmly that his country had a mission to perform both in regard to itself and the world. As Prof. D. G. Karve has put it, "This mission was none other than the process of evolving an integral human civilization for itself and to propagate it abroad much in the manner in which the old Aryan or Hindu civilization spread over most parts of the then known world."

To this end, he bent his energies throughout the years that were given to him. He was content with a little progress if big advance was unrealisable but he was very particular about its direction he would not tolerate deflection from the right course. He himself studied exhaustively all outstanding problems of public policy and such as he was unable to deal with, he entrusted to several enthusiastic and able workers like Joshi, Gokhale and others whom he had attracted to himself. All of them took counsel together and made full use of one another's study. His associates in distant parts of the country also collaborated with him. He created about him an atmosphere that was simultaneously academic and practical and even in Government quarters, which were not always sympathetic and quite often hostile, he established a reputation for reliability and moderation. The memorials,



representations and petitions submitted to Government under the auspices of the Sarvajanik Sabha were, therefore, respectfully treated and often the suggestions made in these submissions were wholly or partially accepted. Submissions on matters of high policy, naturally, were only acknowledged and were simply 'under consideration'. Ranade was not disappointed with or deterred by such treatment because he intended them as much for the Government as for the political education of the people. It was a training in demanding and deserving a better, popular, democratic and representative administration. All of Ranade's political activity was essentially constructive. His criticism was always accompanied by suggestions for remedying existing defects. Politics to him was management of the affairs of the polity, the collective unit, into whose life all the smaller strands of interests were properly unified and justly balanced. Ancient political notions in India regarding the responsibility of the ruler or the State were according to him in accordance with such a comprehensive and positive view of politics and he wanted the Government of India also to behave in keeping with this paternal view of rulership until at least Indians attained a representative and democratic form of Government. He wanted not merely restrictive but also constructive action on the part of the State.

From some of the utterances and writings of Ranade, it is easy to determine that he was in favour of a written constitution for self-governing India, that he favoured a federal form of Government with sufficiently autonomous units forming the Indian State, much as it obtains now, with largely decentralised powers and full-fledged local self-governing bodies and defence of the country being the concern of the federal Government. In his scheme of things, the Indian Princes would have become members of a body like the House of Lords and their States might have remained as constitutionally and democratically governed units. The smaller of them might even have been abolished with the approval of their rulers. All this was in keeping with his general principles, but it is obvious that no occasion to frame a full-fledged Indian constitution arose in his time and so it is wrong to expect him to have formulated more concrete constitutional proposals. As an instance of how he saw afar and correctly into the future may be cited his conception of the Mahrattas being united in a single State as part of a federated India, which is contained in the *Rise of the*

*Mahratta Power* at the conclusion of the first chapter. This came true 60 years later when a constituent State of the Indian Union under the name Maharashtra State came into existence on May 1, 1960.

It should not be considered surprising that most of the political reforms advocated by Ranade were expressed in his addresses at the Social Reform Conferences, because he considered political reform as only part of social re-construction. Considering the fact that India lacked geographical and cultural homogeneity, he made up his mind that a centralised system of administration was quite unsuitable. So he adopted the federal principle as a necessary pivot of the Indian constitution. So decentralisation of power was one of the fundamental principles in his political thinking and this he applied not merely to big provinces — he did not speak of any linguistic provinces as a principle because no occasion for it arose — but also to local self-governing institutions and advocated considerable devolution of powers and privileges to village panchayats. When he saw that Lord Ripon was intent upon a liberal measure democratising and empowering the municipalities and local boards with additional duties and authority to impose taxation, he pressed for a widespread scheme of local self-government with village bodies as the foundation and municipalities and local boards as the higher steps. He did not, however, succeed, because the legislation in this behalf left the villages untouched. Yet he advised people to take the benefit of what was given and appealed to the educated and uneducated alike to utilise the opportunity of serving the people by working on the municipal and local boards.

Ranade's fundamental and axiomatic faith was that the movements of the world were providentially arranged and therefore the vicissitudes of India's history were also providentially arranged. Britain's conquest of India, therefore, was an event in which he saw God's beneficent hand. Like the Muslim domination, he regarded the British domination also as a necessary discipline for the evolution of a better India. British association with India was to him a superior educative process, which he expected to last long enough for India to realise her real soul. His address to the Social Conference at Lucknow in 1899 affords a good opportunity to follow the working of his mind on this point. Yet he was fully aware of the immediate evil effects



of the consolidation of British Power in India; they led to her moral, intellectual and cultural paralysis. The new dispensation proved stunning and stupefying. For some time the general reaction was that of meek submission and sullen acquiescence. Gradually came the stage of assessment and appreciation. Men like Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade and Ramesh Chandra Dutt contributed to the awakening of the educated classes to the true character of British rule during this period. Ranade among them took it on himself to remind Indians of their past achievements in the intellectual, cultural and industrial fields and impress on them that a revival of such achievements was not beyond them in association with the British nation, which had for the first time in her history united India under one common rule of law, so that the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of her sons and daughters with that rule was of a common character. Indian nationalism thus developed because of British rule. Formerly, there was only a vague cultural nationalism in existence. Under British domination, the realisation of political solidarity became a fact of daily experience. It manifested itself in the growth of the Indian National Congress and the history of the doings of that organisation became the history of the movement for political freedom. Ranade was one of the original pioneers of this movement, which has today culminated in India being invested with sovereign political power, her membership of the British Commonwealth of Nations being of a perfectly voluntary character. Ranade had looked forward to such a consummation in the fulness of time. In his *resume* of the Ilbert Bill controversy he said : "There can be no question that a nation of 250 millions can never be permanently held down by sheer force and sooner or later in God's Providence and under the encouragement of British example and discipline, the people of this country must rise to the status of a self-governed community and learn to control their own affairs in subordinate alliance with England. The transfer of power is inevitable."

Ranade was a great believer in the fusion of Hindu and Muslim cultures, and the creation of Pakistan by carving out parts of India would have rent his heart as it rent Mahatma Gandhi's. But robust optimist that he was and believing as he did in the providential purpose, he would have again looked forward to co-ordinated and joint activity, on a voluntary basis between Pakistan and India. Though concerned with the predicament of

his country, Ranade was no narrow nationalist. He found time to look outward and even visualised the creation of a world organisation. As Prof. Karve has said, "Neither the mediaeval process of military conquest and occupation, nor its modern counterpart, imperialism, and colonisation were to his liking. Live and let live, learn and educate, buy and sell — these were his mottos. In his political scheme, there would be a common government for the world to order common interests and to allow of the peaceful evolution of culture and commerce. Wherever obstacles to such a process would be raised by selfish or mischievous forces, these would be curbed by the world power. So long as there is no earthly prospect of such a godly state of things coming to pass each state must indeed provide for its effective defence. It must, however, refrain from encroachment on the just rights of other states. Ranade was a pacifist who was prepared to fight. Ranade was an internationalist who was prepared to stand up for the just claims of his own country. And last of all, he was a free trader who was prepared to protect his own industries so that they may hold their own against foreign competition."

Moral elevation, through all activity and institutions that man has raised since the beginning of history, was the purpose of all existence in Ranade's view and all political activity and the doings of the State must contribute to that end. This did not, however, imply that he was a totalitarian. He not only tolerated individual freedom of action and possessions but also saw that they were indispensable. Therefore, he favoured democratic, representative and constitutional governance of human society. He did not want absolute power to be concentrated anywhere. "One of the worst effects," he said, "of absolute power is that it warps men's perceptions in regard to the innate dignity of human nature and its common identity under all manner of extraneous disguises. The representatives of a ruling class soon learn to lisp the shibboleth of the natural and inherent superiority of European over Asiatic races." This is very akin to Lord Acton's aphorism: "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely". About the precise form of Government, he had no occasion to write or speak, but from time to time he went on advocating representation for Indians, first in the British Parliament itself by accommodating about 25 Indians, as far back as 1874, in a petition to Parliament under the auspices of the Sarva-janik Sabha. In 1877 he pleaded for a House of Commons and



a House of Lords in India, in a petition to the Durbar held in Delhi by Lord Lytton. Later came the Legislative Councils and he sat as a nominated member in one of them when he was invited to do so as others like Mandlik, Pherozeshah Mehta and Telang were. The elective element was introduced in the Councils during his own time and he had the good fortune to see men like Tilak and Gokhale elected to the Bombay Legislative Council. He had visualised self-Government for India as a Dominion within the Commonwealth.

When all this is remembered, there is really no room for saying that he was a confirmed pro-British and that he wanted India for ever to be chained to the British yoke. But his real view is often misinterpreted. The late Dr. B. R. Ambedkar referred to this charge, described it as false and without foundation and observed that it was founded on the view Ranade expressed in his address to the 13th Social Conference at Lucknow in 1899. The view was : "It cannot be easily assumed that in God's Providence, such vast multitudes as those who inhabit India were placed centuries together under influences and restraints of alien domination, unless such influences and restraints were calculated to do lasting service in the building up of the strength and character of the people in directions in which the Indian races were most deficient." Dr. Ambedkar proceeded to say that far from casting any reflection upon his self-respect, the whole address testified to his wisdom and sagacity : "The first thing he wanted to convey was that the conquest of India by Britain has given India the time, the opportunity and the necessary shelter for rebuilding, renovating and repairing her economic and social structure, to refit herself for bearing the strain of any foreign aggression when she does become free. The second thing Ranade wanted to convey was that India going out of the British Empire before she had solidified herself into a single nation, unified in thought, in feeling and charged with a sense of a common destiny, was to invite chaos and disruption in the name of independence." Dr. Ambedkar said this at Poona in his address on the 101st birth anniversary of Ranade. But Dr. Ambedkar's interpretation was already succinctly summed up by Ranade himself long before he delivered his Lucknow address in an article contributed to the Sarvajanic Sabha journal in 1886. Ranade's belief that it was by God's will that Britain was entrusted with a great mission in India is expressed there in the following

words : “ The sole rationale of British rule in India is its capacity and its providential purpose of fostering the political education of the country on the largest scale in the civil and public activities ”. In the Lucknow address under reference he summed up the history of India by the observation that, “ The history of this country is but a fairy tale, if it has not illustrated how each invasion from abroad has tended to serve as a discipline of the chosen race and led to the gradual development of the nation to a higher ideal, if not of actual facts, at least of potential capabilities. The nation has never been depressed beyond hope of recovery, but after a temporary submerging under the floods of foreign influences, has reared up its head — absorbing all that is best in the alien civilisation and polity and religions.” He regarded the British connection as the coping-stone of this long disciplining process referring to it as “ the discipline afforded to us by the example and teaching of the most gifted and free nation in the world, whose rule guarantees to us a long continuance of these favourable conditions ”.

When one gets a clear glimpse into the working of Ranade’s mind by following these extracts and secures a firm grasp over his thought processes, one can get at the root of his well-defined political idealism, his day-to-day activities in pursuance of it, his application to small or big questions being alike. Whether it was a public meeting or drafting a memorial in connection with the Crawford affair or review of Sir Richard Temple’s administration or criticism of the Ilbert Bill or agitation in connection with it, or formulation of policy towards Lord Ripon’s extension of the right of local self-government to Indians ; whether it was a petition to Parliament for securing representation to India in the British Parliament or pleading for permanent settlement of land revenue in the Deccan or preparing a scheme for raising a fund for training young Indians abroad as technicians or prescribing a constitution for the territories governed by Indian princes ; whether it was preparing notes and tables of figures for Gokhale’s evidence before the Welby Commission or his own notes on the Famine Commission or pleading for extension of the protective tariff to the Indian sugar industry or assessing the impact of the movements in Central Asia on the future of India, Ranade’s treatment is calm, explanatory, educative, aimed at rousing inquiry, study and application by less adept hands. Knowing all this too well, Tilak recognised in him the great teacher of public workers, the



master who taught them to be fearless, self-respecting and conscientious. He may not have been an active political crusader but he inspired a band of such crusaders and guided them not only in Bombay and Poona, but wherever he went or his influence reached.

In his own lifetime Ranade realised that a generation of public workers, more independent in spirit, more self-confident, more militant in action and prepared to take the consequences of such intrepidity, was rising. It was under his very nose that Tilak and Agarkar practically invited their conviction for defamation of the Kolhapur Diwan and were awarded four months imprisonment. He admired their unflinching spirit. He regarded their rise as a natural development of his own teaching. Both these men differed from him on a number of occasions and followed their course of action, though often they were with him and always paid him homage as their master and respected his wisdom. Ranade rejoiced in these signs of new life. As Dr. Ambedkar said, "No great man really does his work by crippling his disciples by forcing on them his maxims or his conclusions. What he does is to evoke them, to awaken them to a vigorous and various exertion of their faculties. Again the pupil takes his guidance from the master. He is not bound to accept his master's conclusions. For even when he rejects them, he is bound to acknowledge to his master in deep reverence, 'You awakened me to be myself. For that I thank you.' The master is not entitled to less. The disciple is not bound to give more."

Tilak's attitude to Ranade was precisely in keeping with what Ambedkar has laid down. That more militant schools of political thought and action flourished after Ranade and even repudiated Ranade's too lenient, too submissive and too mild ways, did not detract from the glory of Ranade who laid the foundations of public work in every field. Tilak himself has readily recognised this by saying that Ranade was the original, imaginative and ingenious engineer and architect of all projects of national uplift and what others did was to suggest improvements here and there according to the requirements of subsequent times. This is no commonplace compliment of a formal character but has a ring of genuineness about it in Tilak's original words.

In the words of Dinshaw Wacha : "Ranade donned the white robe of the peaceful teacher and strenuously strove, with all the great ability at his command, to enlighten his less enlightened

countrymen in their arduous and herculean work of regeneration. As such he was indeed a beacon light, shedding its light far and wide and showing his straight path which should in the fullness of time, bring all to the great goal of national unity and national progress. It is as a Teacher that Ranade will be best known and his memory cherished by many a generation to come. He was one of those brave but unassuming standard-bearers in the vanguard of the early Indian patriots who held aloft the banner on which is inscribed in letters which are imperishable, the motto of Liberty and Progress."



## XIV

### PATRIARCH OF PATRIOTS

RANADE HAD become so much part of Gokhale that probably there was not a day in the latter's life on which he did not recall reverentially Ranade's memory for one reason or another. His public utterances and speeches on the floors of the Bombay and Supreme Legislative Councils contained frequent references to Ranade's teaching. He concluded his Banaras Congress Presidential address with a quotation from Ranade. These were casual references but at least on three occasions, his specific theme was Ranade and the speeches made then were, as it were, his carefully considered and neatly arranged essays. These are available in the collection of his speeches published by Natesan. Speaking at a memorial meeting held in Bombay on July 9, 1901, Gokhale spoke of Ranade's extraordinary quickness with which he discerned and encouraged all earnest workers in the country. Gokhale said, "He had a wonderful faculty in this respect and as a result he was to many young men scattered all over the country, like the central sun from whom they derived their light and warmth and round whom they moved, each in his own orbit and at his own distance. The feeling of devotion that he was able to inspire in such men was most marvellous and to those young workers who were privileged to come in intimate personal contact with him, his word was law and his approbation their highest earthly reward."

Those who are aware of the Ranade-Gokhale relationship will quickly discern an autobiographical allusion in Gokhale's observation, particularly in the concluding part but indeed, it had, more or less, universal application. What Gokhale said was true not only of the young men who came under Ranade's influence, but also his close contemporaries and not very junior public workers who occasionally differed from him but always respected his authority and wisdom. Among such men were Vishnushastri

Pandit, Ramkrishna Bhandarkar, Vaman Abaji Motak, Shankar Pandurang Pandit, Mahadeo Moreshwar Kunte, Kashinath Trimbak Telang, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Daji Abaji Khare, Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar, Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi, Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi, Byramji Malbari, Dayaram Gidumal, Chimanlal Setalvad, Gokuldas Parekh, Balchandra Krishna Bhatavdekar and a host of others spread all over western India. Among these were also some Englishmen like Hume, Wedderburn, Cotton, Norton and Selby. Hume called him the great god Mahadeo, and Selby spoke of him as their Socrates. This is well summed up by Surendra Nath Banarji nearly 25 years after Ranade's death in his *A Nation in the Making*, in the following words. He said, "Mr. Ranade was, in regard to all public movements in the western presidency the power behind the throne. A public servant, loyal to Government, with that true loyalty, not born of personal motives, but having its roots in the highest consideration of expediency and the public good, he was the guide, friend and philosopher of the public men of the western presidency; and all public movements, were they political, social or religious, bore the impress of his masterful personality."

Of all public workers, Gokhale was most influenced by Ranade. He was introduced to Ranade at the young age of 21 and Ranade was older than he by no less than 24 years. Ranade was well impressed with him. His intelligence, enthusiasm, humility, readiness to take orders and a sense of duty and responsibility were much appreciated by Ranade, and Gokhale became not only his devoted and trusted disciple but as Ramabai has once said, Ranade regarded him as his dutiful son in whom he reposed complete confidence. For Gokhale too, his word was law on every matter. It was a case of complete surrender for being blessed and the relationship that existed between these two men from 1887 to 1901 in which year Ranade died, has evoked a remark from Prof. J. R. Raju which deserves reproduction here. "The story of this friendship is one of the most beautiful romances of modern Indian history. For years they were engaged together in the close study of the progress and destiny of nations, the inner meaning of public events, the far-off results of action, the discipline of failure, service and sacrifice and the infinite play of human motive and passion, not only in profound treatises of political philosophy, but also in the ephemeral effusions of the daily press and in ponderous Government



publications. Surely, there is no fairer sight on earth than the close communion of two such kindred spirits and it has brought untold blessings in its train on us all."

In his day-to-day work of the Sarvajanik Sabha and its journal the two Joshis who distinguished themselves by collaborating with Ranade may be mentioned next. Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi was the man who had already founded the Sarvajanik Sabha, before Ranade came to Poona in 1871, for a limited purpose. After consultation with Ranade, it became a permanent association for carrying on public work in people's interest. Joshi came to be nick-named Sarvajanik Kaka, meaning People's Uncle. He was the chief executive of the body as long as he lived. He was not only content with taking guidance from Ranade but rejoiced in it, though he was older of the two in years. Shivram Hari Sathe and Sitaram Hari Chiplunkar were two other men who were Ranade's lieutenants after Joshi. The former was the gentleman who introduced Gokhale to Ranade and Gokhale was so grateful to him that Sathe was invited by Gokhale to lay the foundation-stone of the Servants of India Society on June 12, 1905. Chiplunkar was the first Secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha and first editor of its quarterly journal. G. V. Joshi later became Rao Bahadur and was elected to the Bombay Legislative Council when the Morley-Minto reforms came into existence. It is to this gentleman that Ranade entrusted Gokhale for the study of statistics, blue-books, returns and registers. He was headmaster of the Satara, Sholapur, Ahmednagar and Poona High Schools at various times. He was an unrivalled student of all matters pertaining to agriculture, economics, finance and statistics which he handled with perfect ease. Ranade trustfully depended upon him for all the conclusions to be drawn from his studies. It was to Joshi's studies that the Welby Commission turned for making its authoritative statements and the minority of the Commission consisting of Wedderburn, Dadabhai and W. S. Caine also turned to Joshi while drawing up their separate report. After Ranade died, Gokhale wrote to him, "Now that Rao Saheb is gone, you are the only one to whom I can turn for light and guidance in the study of public questions". Joshi was Ranade's adherent, but after his retirement, he found that he had more sympathy for Tilak's camp than Gokhale's.

While Vishnusastry Pandit edited the *Induprakash* and carried on his crusade against the restrictions on widow marriage among

Hindus, he derived the greatest support from Ranade in all the controversies that followed. Ranade contributed to the English columns of his paper and Pandit derived great help from Ranade in finding out authorities in favour of his stand from old Sanskrit texts. It was at Ranade's house in Poona that a banquet to him was given on his marrying a widow. The sequel to this was a great misunderstanding between Ranade and his father, which Ranade succeeded in removing by promising to his father that such incidents would not be repeated. Ranade had the misfortune to be admonished by this friend and colleague when Ranade once again submitted to his father and married a child bride, but still Vishnushastri remained his adherent and perhaps sympathised with him also in his heart of hearts. Ramkrishna Bhandarkar kept himself aloof from Ranade's activities in the field of politics and economics but was his great collaborator in the Prarthana Samaj activities and highly respected his judgment even if on some occasions, he held different opinions, as for instance, in the controversy that raged round the question: Why our graduates die young. In what high esteem Bhandarkar held Ranade may be seen from the following extract from a letter he once wrote to Ranade. Bhandarkar had received a letter from Ranade in which Ranade had inquired about Mrs. Bhandarkar's health, because she was not then keeping well and advised Bhandarkar to be a *Vanaprastha*, meaning thereby that he should retire from active life. Bhandarkar's reply dated February 13, 1878 said, "The call to assume the vows of Vanaprasthya comes to me from on High, from Him... Yes, it is from Him that the call comes and one indication of it is that I should have been written to on the point by a person like your good self in the best judgments and feelings of whom, the spirit of God realises itself." Similar were the feelings of his other Prarthana Samaj colleagues like Atmaram Pandurang, N. M. Parmanand, Vaman Abaji Modak and others.

Ramesh Chandra Dutt was a close contemporary of Ranade. They met only when the Indian National Congress and the National Social Conference held their sessions. He was one of the four Indians who passed the I. C. S. in London in 1869. The other three were Bihari Lal Gupta, Surendra Nath Banarji and Shripad Babaji Thakur. The last two were ultimately disqualified for service because they were held to have given inaccurate age returns. Dutt was the first Indian to become Commissioner of a Division.



He retired in 1897 and afterwards settled down in England. In 1899 he was elected President of the Indian National Congress at Lucknow and later he became Dewan of Baroda. Like Sir William Wedderburn and Ranade he held that the permanent settlement of land revenue everywhere, as in Bengal, would benefit the peasantry. He was a great admirer of Ranade and his work which he closely watched from a distance and he jointly worked with him whenever possible. In 1899 after he was free from his duties as President of the Congress he came to the Social Conference. Ranade requested him to move the conference resolution on Hindu-Muslim unity. While consenting to do so promptly, he said, "I feel it an honour to take part in these proceedings, because I have complete sympathy with your aims and aspirations and because I believe that this Social Conference is likely to do a vast deal of good. I feel further honour in taking part in these proceedings as we know they are conducted by that honourable gentlemen, Mr. Justice Ranade. We in Calcutta respect him as much as you do in Lucknow." Dutt subsequently became a lecturer in history of the London University, wrote novels in Bengali and translated *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* into English. He was also a great admirer of Gokhale and his work in the Supreme Legislative Council. He was a great literary figure of his times.

Sir Pherozeshah Mehta was as close a contemporary of Ranade as Sir Ramesh Chandra Dutt. They were collaborators not only in the Congress but also in the University of Bombay. Pherozeshah's way of life was such that he could not go everywhere and do everything but whatever he did was done in such a way as to inspire not only confidence but also awe in friendly as well as hostile camps. He had very great regard for Ranade and called him his friend. On occasions he took pride in proclaiming his agreement with him purposefully and to make his statement more weighty. They were also colleagues in the Bombay Legislative Council till Ranade was appointed Judge of the Bombay High Court. Pherozeshah often quoted him as authority in his speeches and sometimes went out of his way to pay him a compliment. For example, once in 1895, he spoke of Ranade's "great talents and varied accomplishments which are devoted to the service of his country with an untiring zeal and unflagging perseverance which are equalled only by the simplicity of his heart and the nobility of his mind". Again in his address as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the

Congress Session for 1904 he said, "I am an inveterate, a robust optimist like my late friend, Mahadeo Govind Ranade". Ranade counted on Pherozeshah as the most reliable and intrepid of his associates in public work.

Men like Rao Bahadur Bhide, Rao Bahadur Mahajani, Rao Bahadur Mudholkar, Rao Bahadur Bhat, Sir Bepin Krishna Bose, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, Ganesh Shrikrishna Khaparde, Sir Moropant Joshi and a number of public men who were associated with Ranade in his social, political, educational and industrial activities were not men who took their work with the same seriousness and devotion as Ranade did but were anxious to give him a helping hand and Ranade was content to welcome whatever was willingly given. He wanted every one to do his best, but he did not go about fault-finding and criticising those people who were preoccupied and had other commitments. He made only such calls as were likely to be responded to and there he was seldom disappointed. In fact these men loved to remain attached to him for one reason or another. Some of these men used to be his guests during the summer vacation at Poona and enjoyed his hospitality which he was quite liberal in extending. He was, therefore, their patriarch in more senses than one.

Sir Narayan Chandavarkar as a close contemporary of Tilak was junior to Ranade. He succeeded Ranade as the judge of the Bombay High Court and Ranade's mantle as a social reform propagandist is also regarded as having fallen on him. He shared Ranade's love for the student world and utilised his leisure to give them lectures on English literature and philosophy. Chandavarkar was Ranade's successor on the pulpit of the Bombay Prarthana Samaj also. The Ranade pattern of work and behaviour did not entirely suit him as his career later showed. But he was a great admirer and friend of Ranade. What he said about Ranade from time to time in other contexts has appeared elsewhere in this book.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad was associated more with Sir Pherozeshah Mehta than Ranade, but had full appreciation for his qualities of head and heart. He has spoken chiefly of his activities in the University of Bombay in his *Recollections and Reflections*. Reference has been made early about how Chimanlal completed Ranade's unfinished work in regard to the introduction of Indian languages in the Bombay University Curriculum. Setalvad says, "As a public speaker Ranade had not the forcefulness of Pherozeshah



or Surendranath Banarjee but he had a deep, clear voice and could always hold an audience". He has described how Ranade, a sitting judge of the High Court vehemently disagreed with Justice Candy, who was then Vice-Chancellor over the question of extension of legal education which was then (1896-97) in a very unsatisfactory condition in Bombay. In the Government Law School, there were then three professors, and more than 400 students. So it was proposed to start a private law college by a committee of which Justice Badruddin Tyabji was the chairman and Chandavarkar and Setalvad were among its members. An application was made to the University for affiliation of this College on November 15, 1897. Justice Candy started the bogey of sedition and said that the professors of the proposed college might teach sedition to the pupils. So he was against affiliation. Members of the Syndicate led by Ranade declared the suspicion as baseless and insulting. Dr. Mackichan also supported Ranade and the resolution in favour of affiliation was carried even in the Senate. Government, however, was not disposed favourably towards the move. A committee with the Director of Public Instruction as chairman was appointed to consider measures for the reorganisation of the existing school and some improvements were made. But no efforts to start a private college to instruct students in law were encouraged. Ranade regretted very much this attitude of the Government.

Telang died a premature death and Ranade succeeded him as High Court Judge, though he should have preceded him, because he was older and equally competent as a lawyer. That was the feeling of many, even among officials, but Ranade's public work, though done from behind the curtain came in the way of his preferment. He did not mind it as has been pointed out before. Indeed he rejoiced in the choice of Telang whom he regarded as his younger brother and highly admired his intellectual attainments and eloquence. Telang was his colleague in social reform work and historical research work. Ranade went to the extent of calling his own school of thought as the Telang school of thought in one of his addresses. That was Ranade's way. Nothing pleased him more, as Gokhale said, than to do his work, not only political but of almost every kind, from behind somebody else. His great anxiety was to get more and more men interested in and associated with the work. Telang was one of the most eminent of the

intellectuals of his day who was greatly attached to Ranade. Had Telang lived longer their collaboration would have resulted in the writing of a full history of modern Maharashtra. But that was not to be. Whatever Ranade had written as a sequel to the *Rise of the Maharatta Power* was in the custody of M. B. Kolaskar, a ward of Shankar Pandurang Pandit, whom Ranade had taken up in deference to the last wishes of Pandit who died under Ranade's roof. Kolaskar intended to publish them but this did not happen before he also died. He failed to hand over the papers to Ramabai in spite of repeated demands and thus the valuable manuscript was lost.

Sir M. Visvesvaraya who died recently was a contemporary of Ranade. He came in contact with him and appreciated his nation-building plans. Dr. D. K. Karve is another such person but has not much to say by way of direct personal contact. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye met Ranade only once : when he went to see Ranade, because he wanted to apply for a university scholarship for studies in England after he had passed his B. Sc. examination. That was in 1895. Dr. Paranjpye does not remember who took him to Ranade, but it was either Karve or Gokhale. Paranjpye got the scholarship with the backing of Ranade who was then a member of the Syndicate of the Bombay University. But before Paranjpye came back to India as a Senior Wrangler, Ranade had passed away. Paranjpye says that in those days Ranade was a sort of general consultant and adviser on every public matter and even on private, individual matters and Ranade's advice was freely, unstintedly and generously given. It was often accompanied by monetary help also, in needy and deserving cases.

Sir M. Visvesvaraya's reminiscences are more picturesque. He had then joined the Public Works Department and was posted at Poona as a deputy engineer. It was in 1880 and as a member of the Kreedha Bhuvan Club, that his contacts with Ranade were frequent and intimate. Ranade always spoke about some matter or other of public and patriotic interest, as far as Sir M. Visvesvaraya could recall. When he was transferred to Nasik in 1884 Ranade gave him letters of introduction and asked him always to keep in touch with him. He was again posted at Poona in 1891 when Ranade welcomed him for discussions and talks as previously. Ranade got him to contribute occasionally to the Sarvajanic Sabha quarterly.

Sir M. Visvesvaraya has related a typical reminiscence of Ranade,



He had once the good fortune of sitting next to him in the annual durbar of the Deccan Sardars, princes and Government officials that used to be held in the Council Hall under the chairmanship of the Poona District and Sessions Judge. Ranade began to tell him of the traditions, habits and behaviour of some of the Princes who were seated at some distance in front of him. According to Ranade, one of them was a fanatic and a bigot, another used to take his only meal in the afternoon, a third was neck-deep in debt and almost a bankrupt and a fourth was almost a recluse. Visvesvaraya was surprised and asked Ranade how he got all this information and whether he was so intimate with them all. Ranade replied that he never went to see them; they went to see him and consulted him on all kinds of private and public matters. His counsel, as usual, was free, frank and well-intentioned. It was Visvesvaraya who propagated planning and gave the slogan 'Industrialise or Perish' to India in his mature years but its origin may well be traced to his early association and discussions with Ranade.

Tilak and Agarkar may well be described as men who were impressed and influenced by Ranade's unsparing and unceasing endeavour in various nationalistic activities, but they had a different and independent outlook on public affairs. They were disciples but dared to differ from the master as to the methods and remedies to cure the ills they were agreed upon. Yet they looked upon Ranade as a counsellor and respected his counsel, if on occasions they found it unacceptable. Ranade's advice to the Tilak-Agarkar-Apte-Chiplunkar group to establish a national church, national press and national education was considered sound by them but they followed their own line in implementation. Agarkar was a thorough-going rationalist and worshipped only at the shrine of Reason-*cum*-Conscience. Indeed he ploughed his lonely furrow, because his other colleagues in the Deccan Education Society also did not consider it practical and prudent to go the whole hog with him. Such was Tilak and being so he entered into conflict with Ranade also. He came to the notice of the all-India public as a vigorous participant in the controversy that raged round the Age of Consent Bill as an opponent of that measure and as one who ably crossed swords with Ranade and Bhandarkar in the field of Sanskrit learning and interpretation of ancient socio-religious texts. That was more or less an academic warfare, but the aggressive and vehement style of Tilak's writing stuck in public memory

and Tilak came to be stigmatised as a young publicist who challenged Ranade's supremacy as a doyen of Indian patriots and public men and was probably a competitor for that honour. It is true that even thereafter Tilak led minor assaults on Ranade, but it is quite erroneous to conclude from all this that Tilak, ever, in any way, under-rated Ranade's greatness and his position as the great teacher and topmost patriot and public man of the day.

The most virulent attack that Tilak made on Ranade was when the latter, yielding to the pressure of his followers, agreed to start the Deccan Sabha after Tilak and his supporters had won a majority in the Sarvajanik Sabha. However venomous his language, it was a principle on which Tilak took his stand and argued that Ranade had sacrificed that principle and for once, showed small-mindedness, even while being a patriot of far-sight and vision. Tilak, no doubt, used such intemperate and strong language as to appear almost wicked on this particular occasion but he himself was conscious of it and hoped and prayed that he would not have another occasion in his life to let his pen go against Ranade in the manner he had done. What was the principle involved, according to him? Ranade for the first time defined 'moderation and liberalism' in the creed that he drafted for the Deccan Sabha to which its members were expected to subscribe. He thus monopolised or appropriated 'moderation and liberalism' for them and isolated others as extremist and insular which he had no right to do, especially because by so characterising others he was unwittingly exposing them to Government's special surveillance and consequential steps. Tilak did not charge Ranade with such an intent, but pointed out that such was the effect or result of his action. Tilak was not wrong in his logic as subsequent events proved. But for this one frontal attack on Ranade, Tilak always spoke or wrote about him in terms of respect and esteem. Any suggestion of personal hostility or competition between them is out of the question, so far as Ranade was concerned, and even Tilak could only be unfairly accused of this as was done by Anglo-Indian and allied scribes of those days. All that Ranade had to say regarding this frontal attack as he wrote to a friend in Madras was, "It is a genuine struggle between earnest men".

A man's real mind can be read when he makes unguarded and spontaneous statements. Tilak was once pointing out an error in Gokhale's way of thinking. Gokhale argued once that there



was intellectual degeneration among university graduates because among them were not found giants like Ranade and Bhandarkar. Tilak said such men were always exceptional and for making statements of the kind Gokhale ventured to make, only averages were the proper standard for consideration and in the course of his argument burst out : “ Can we expect a peer of Ranade to be born within a hundred years after him ? ” This one sentence is an unmistakable index of how Tilak rated Ranade. There are numerous references in Tilak’s writings to Ranade which are full of esteem and admiration, the obituary of Ranade being the topmost of them all. It has almost become a classic. As a matter of fact, Agarkar was even more aggressive and derisive in his attacks on Ranade, and yet they have not been retained in public memory. It is not unoften that uncritical writers bracket Ranade and Agarkar together as protagonists of social reform and Tilak is singled out as a champion of the incorrigible orthodox. Agarkar, however, knew Tilak much better than such critics and he once roundly warned the orthodox that Tilak was not their man though he might on occasions be their advocate. That was, indeed, a correct assessment of Tilak. As a matter of fact, so far as mental attitude and even practical conduct were concerned Ranade and Tilak ought to have been bracketed together and Agarkar kept apart from them. On one conspicuous occasion they were indeed so bracketed. The occasion was provided by the Panch Haud Mission tea party where Tilak and Ranade were present among others and both of them were boycotted by the orthodox Brahmins of Poona till they submitted to penance. Apte of the Tilak-Agarkar group who became the first Principal of the Fergusson College and Agarkar who was the second Principal were short-lived men. Had they lived longer their relationship with Ranade would probably have been of the same character as that of Tilak. Apte once challenged Ranade’s knowledge of Sanskrit and made a distasteful attack on him. Ranade, of course, did not mind.

Srinivasa Sastri had no direct contact with Ranade. He had already reached a ripe age when Sastri first saw him, but he had the benefit of having heard him and studied his writings and speeches and he had naturally placed him among his heroes. According to him, the most compendious way of describing Ranade would be to call him the ‘ Father of Modern India ’ and he held that Ranade was great in every sense of the word. Speaking on the Gokhale

anniversary in 1936 at the Madras branch of the Servants of India Society, Sastri spoke about Gokhale's many contemporaries when he made the following observations about Ranade : " Ranade was 'an unrivalled figure and he had what few leaders have, the marvellous gift of attracting young and promising men and giving that turn to their minds and hearts which renders them great instruments of public welfare. He was an eminent statesman and, precluded as he was from direct participation in the daily work of politics, his figure could always be seen in the intimate discussions of the subjects committee of the Congress. Every difficulty was referred to him. At every crisis he would interpose with his great authority and the Congressmen of those days, giants though they were, were proud to acknowledge that many a time Mr. Ranade kept them straight on the road of progress. Mr. Ranade had already reached ripe years when I saw him. I cannot therefore pretend out of personal knowledge to dissect him for your benefit. I remember however, very vividly a meeting in the Anderson Hall of Madras when he lectured to a large and distinguished audience upon ' South India A Hundred Years Ago '. He was actually, however, reviewing a work that had just been published — Abbe Dubois's *Manners and Customs of the Hindus*, a book showing a great deal of research and industry, but, at the same time, disfigured by a bitter prejudice against the Brahmin community. Justice Ranade stood up to review this book. I saw him for the first time then. He was not very tall, though his build was such that we thought he was rather tall. He had an ungainly look. There was a massiveness about his face which repelled rather than attracted. His voice was gruff. His manner was by no means pleasing and when he began to speak there was a running from the nose and he had to apply a handkerchief to it frequently, I think it was coloured, to relieve himself. Most of us thought that the address coming from such a figure must fall flat. But he had scarcely uttered three sentences when we forgot who was standing before us. He lifted the subject straightaway to the region of the upper air of thought and aspiration, and as he spoke without effort, sentence after sentence rolled from his lips carrying words of wisdom and concentrated thought. We could scarcely take our eyes off him during the whole of that discourse, and when it came to a close we felt that we had listened to a voice which was not altogether of this earth. That was Ranade. No wonder when Mr. Gokhale came



under his spell he was transformed.”

C. Y. Chintamani's attitude towards Ranade was similar to that of Sastri. Both of them being close colleagues in journalistic activity in Madras along with the late Natarajan, they had no direct contact with Ranade. Chintamani's estimate of Ranade is also very much the same as Sastri's. In his lectures delivered at the Andhra University on 'Indian Politics Since the Mutiny', Chintamani says, "Ranade was mighty in intellect, a man of prodigious industry and of vast and various learning ; a profound thinker ; an ardent patriot. Handicapped as he was by having been in Government Service all his life, he was a keen political worker, a religious reformer and a still more ardent social reformer, one of the greatest authorities on Indian economics, a great educationist, the inspirer and instructor of younger men who flocked to him. With all these rare accomplishments Ranade was the most modest, simple, courteous, unassuming of men, full of piety and the humility which is the invariable accompaniment of true greatness."

N. C. Kelkar was a journalist all his life and had innumerable occasions to refer to Ranade in his writings for one reason or other, but notably he has given his estimate of Ranade in his biography of Tilak and in his special article in the *Sahyadri* special number published on the occasion of Ranade's birth centenary in 1942. In his autobiography in Marathi, Kelkar has described the occasion on which he saw Ranade in Bombay in 1896. The Indian National Congress was then ten years old and he wished to survey its ten years' achievements in the form of a pamphlet. Ranade heartily welcomed Kelkar, spent a couple of hours with him to relate the whole history and gave a piece of advice to Kelkar which he highly prized. Ranade said, "While writing on any subject, make it a point first to study what Government has to say on it in its press notes or reports and then make your comments. Whether mild or strong, your criticism should be dignified." Kelkar seized every opportunity to speak of Ranade's greatness to younger men and never lost sight of his contribution to the making of modern India.

In his biography of Tilak, Kelkar wrote, "Ranade was a master not only of Poona and Maharashtra but the whole of India. There was no corner of India which did not look upon him as the great teacher because of his learning, political acumen and patriotism. There was no public man in India who did not bow to him

at the mere mention of his name. He stood on the elevated rock of unremitting public service. Without caring too much for the frowns of Government or the favours of the people, he stuck to the path he had carved out for himself. He had a number of friends among Englishmen but he ever refused to join their socials and clubs and hobnob with them. Yet he never gave offence to any one of them. He preserved his self-respect intact by his cautious and discreet and correct conduct. He was never a prize-boy of the Government. It was Telang and Bhandarkar who were appointed Vice-Chancellors of the University of Bombay but never Ranade (nor even Pherozeshah until in the year of his death). The reason for this deliberate omission is plain. It was surely not Ranade's deficiency in scholarship or intellectual inferiority. He was among the three or four originators of the Indian National Congress. Tilak appreciated his worth perfectly well and even when he became the undisputed spokesman of India, he referred to Ranade in the highest terms of respect. They differed quite often, worked in different camps and had quite dissimilar temperaments but there is no doubt that much of his inspiration was drawn by Tilak from Ranade."

There is no doubt that Kelkar in his own public life was more a follower of Ranade's pattern than Tilak's. His equable temperament and judicial attitude towards all questions were copied from Ranade as also his versatile interests and his willingness to be helpful and serviceable to all his fellowmen without any distinction. Although, Kelkar was Tilak's active associate and dutiful lieutenant for over twenty years and Tilak heavily leaned on him for a great deal of his public and semi-public work, it would appear that Kelkar's model of a public man was Ranade.

Next to Gokhale, the late Professor V. G. Kale was a close student of Ranade's economic and political thought. He worked as Ranade's reader for a number of years and that gave him more frequent and somewhat intimate opportunities of watching Ranade at work and listening to his spontaneous utterances. After retirement from Fergusson College, Professor Kale was for some time a member of the former Council of State and the Indian Tariff Board. It was Professor Kale who first brought to light Ranade's anonymous contributions to the *Times of India* on the question of protection to the Indian sugar industry. He knew because he had worked as an amanuensis to Ranade on that occasion. What



Professor Kale has to say about Ranade has, therefore, some peculiar significance.

Prof. Kale's remarks about Ranade's love of learning were : " I may venture to say that his love of learning, his love of reading and his love of work had been, in certain cases, carried to excess. ...He would certainly have prolonged his precious, highly useful life, at least by a decade, if he had taken proper care of his health and if he had not sacrificed it to his extreme love of reading and of work. As it was, he would forego his meals rather than his morning paper or his books. Many times he forgot his dinner time and his tiffin time and would go on reading and reading till he had to be reminded of it. "

Prof. Kale said as follows about his concentration while at work : " While he was writing a judgment say at 4 o' clock in the afternoon on a Sunday, if his servant brought him a cup of cocoa, which was sufficiently warm to be immediately taken, the servant would have to stand there for minutes together without attracting his master's attention. At last when Ranade raised his head to look up for something, he would notice his servant standing, the cup of cocoa in hand. He would take the cup and on applying it to his lips, he would find that the beverage had become cold as it was bound to be, would send it back for being made warm again. When the servant came back with the hot, steaming cocoa, he would find his master again absorbed in work, so that he would have to go back with the cup of cocoa again as before. Ranade's cocoa was thus either too warm or too cold."

## XV

### RANADE AND GANDHI

GANDHIJI MET Ranade face to face but once — in 1896. He had come to India from South Africa to enlist his countrymen's support in the cause of Indians in South Africa which he had, so ardently and resolutely espoused. On landing in Bombay he made his first call on Ranade with whom he was in constant correspondence. As Gokhale has said, Ranade was his never-failing adviser. He made his next call on Badruddin Tyabji. Both of them assured him of their sympathy and support but told him that as judges of Her Majesty's High Court, they could not publicly associate themselves in political agitation and advised him to get in touch with active politicians, Pherozeshah Mehta to begin with. Gandhiji called on Mehta and later on Tilak and Gokhale in Poona. Gandhiji has more than once recalled these meetings in his later writings and described his impressions quite picturesquely. He has more than once referred to Ranade as 'my master's master'. Once he wrote, "Justice Ranade awed me. I could hardly talk in his presence."

In 1902, Gandhiji was again in India and stayed with Gokhale in Calcutta for a month, when he frequently heard Gokhale referring to Ranade. Gandhiji writes, "His (Gokhale's) reverence for Ranade could be seen every moment. Ranade's authority was final in every matter and he could cite it at every step. The anniversary of Ranade's death (or birth I forget which) occurred during my stay with Gokhale, who observed it regularly. There were with him then his friends, Prof. Kathwate and a sub-judge. He invited us to take part in the celebration and in his speech he gave us his reminiscences of Ranade. He compared incidentally Ranade, Telang and Mandlik. He eulogised Telang's charming style and Mandlik's greatness as a reformer. Citing an instance of Mandlik's solicitude for his clients, he told us an anecdote as to how, he once



having missed his usual train, he engaged a special train so as to be able to attend the court in the interest of his client. But Ranade, he said, towered above them all, as a versatile genius....He was not only a great judge, he was an equally great historian and economist and reformer. Although he was a judge, he fearlessly attended the Congress and every one had such confidence in his sagacity that they unquestioningly accepted his decisions. Gokhale's joy knew no bounds as he described these qualities of head and heart which were all combined in his master."

Once again describing his only meeting with Ranade, Gandhiji said, "I also saw Ranade, but I could not have access to the innermost recesses of his heart. I knew him only as Gokhale's master. I do not know why ; perhaps it was because he was so much my senior in age and experience that I could not know him as I knew Gokhale." What Gandhiji has described as Ranade's anniversary and its being regularly observed by Gokhale was but the first anniversary of Ranade's death since he died on January 16, 1901 and Gandhiji was in India in 1902. During this stay Gandhiji offered his services to Gokhale as a volunteer for collecting funds for the Ranade memorial as his letters to Gokhale written from Rajkot and Madras clearly show. These letters were well preserved in the Servants of India Society and are now with the committee engaged in the work of publishing the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi in New Delhi but may eventually find their way to the Gandhi Museum.

Perhaps the last public reference that Gandhiji made to Ranade was in his speech on the 'Quit India' resolution at the All India Congress Committee meeting on August 8, 1942. Gandhiji said, "The late Justice Ranade did not resign his post, but he openly declared that he belonged to the Congress. He said to the Government that he was a Judge, he was a Congressman and would openly attend the sessions of the Congress, but that at the same time, he would not let his political views warp his impartiality on the Bench. He held Social Reform Conferences in the very *pandal* of the Congress. I would ask all Government Servants to follow in the footsteps of Ranade."

In 1935, Gandhiji came to know about one little thing that Ranade had done in 1880 which filled Gandhiji's heart with grateful delight and renewed reverence for Ranade. Quoting Gokhale, he expressed his feelings on this occasion in the *Harijan* (21-8-35)

in the following words : “ As the late Gokhale used to say, nothing escaped Ranade’s eagle eye and nothing that would benefit the least of his countrymen was ever too trifling for his consideration”. The discovery that prompted this observation was that Ranade had made an effort to remodel and improve the spinning wheel. Ranade published a press-note in the Sarvajanik Sabha quarterly journal and in order that it should attract the attention of as many of his countrymen as possible sent it for publication in the Indian press in December 9, 1880. It appeared over the signatures of Ranade and a collaborator of his, known as Shrinivasa Shesso Hattibelgalkar. Ranade sought to introduce for general use an improved charka. The press note read as follows :

“ Cotton grows in various parts of the country and the industry of spinning yarn on the Charka (Rahat) is carried on at various places on a large scale, since yarn spun on the Charka has yet a vast demand. Under the circumstances, improvement in the mode of spinning has immense possibilities of doing good to the indigent and diligent. Towards this end is this advertisement being published for a spinning machine with the following improvements :

(1) An apparatus, either as a part of the spinning machine itself or independent of it for cleaning the cotton.

(2) The machine should yield at least five threads instead of one and thus should increase five-fold the total output.

(3) The yarn besides being even, should be fine, at least as much as the yarn woven into Khadi ; it may not be more coarse.

(4) The machine besides being strong, should be simple, must work smoothly and without break.

(5) The machine is not required merely as a model (in a museum) but it must yield work in actual practice. The machines (to the above order) that will be submitted before the 15th of May 1881 will be examined by experts and a prize of Rs. 500 will be awarded to the maker of one which will be approved by the examiners.

(6) The said maker has to undertake to supply machines up to 25 in number at our demand for a fair price and also has to undertake guarantee to repair the machines, if out of order within four months of their use.

Those then that mean to try this experiment should accordingly inform the undersigned in writing within two months from the



date of this notice. Details may be had personally from one of the undersigned, Mr. Hattibelgalkar, Shukrawar Peth, Poona or through a postpaid letter."

Ranade died in 1901 and Gandhi returned to India for good from South Africa in 1915. So there could be no direct contact between them except the one in 1896. Gandhi is most appropriately Ranade's grand spiritual descendant, as a study of the character and doings of both makes obvious. They are eminently kindred in spirit, in mental composition and personal behaviour. Belief simultaneously in the Providential hand in shaping the course of events and in human action to help that course is perhaps their basic similarity. Just as Ranade believed in India's mission of leading the world towards peace and human brotherhood, Gandhi also believed in it and both exerted themselves towards the realisation of that end. Some passages from the writings of both are worth comparing in this connection. Ranade professed implicit faith in two articles of his creed: "This country of ours is a true land of promise. This race of ours is a chosen race." The mission before it was none other than the process of evolving an integrated human civilisation for herself and propagating it abroad much in the manner in which the old Aryan or Hindu civilisation spread over most parts of the then known world. Gandhi wrote, "I am confident that God has made me the instrument of showing the better way. My mission is to convert every Indian and finally the world to non-violence for regulating mutual relations whether political, economic, religious or social." Gandhi expressed his confidence in the world of tomorrow with perfect optimism, defining India's role in shaping it in the following words, "I feel in the innermost recesses of my heart that the world is sick unto death of blood-spilling. The world is seeking a way out and I flatter myself with the belief that perhaps it will be the privilege of this ancient land of India to show the way out to the hungry world."

This high idealism actuated both Ranade and Gandhi, though naturally their immediate work in pursuance of that ideal lay only in India. Gandhi, of course, covered vast ground and became a world influence even during his life-time as afterwards, claiming followers in Europe, Africa and America. Although India remained his main field of activity he was looking forward to a time when he and his disciples would eventually go abroad with his message.

In any case, followers abroad were expecting this to happen, particularly the Negroes in America. In declining to go to America, not for white America, but even for the Negroes at the request of Dr. and Mrs. Thurman, Gandhiji had said, "How I wish I could ! It may be through the Negroes that the unadulterated message of non-violence will be delivered to the world, but I would not move on to the world stage until I feel the call within. I must make the message good here before I bring it to you." Gandhiji's work was but an extension and expansion not only of the thought of Ranade, but the thought of all of India's saints and men of God who had gone before them through the corridors of India's history. Ranade had always viewed India as the land of cultural synthesis which had inherited "a civilisation and a religious and social polity which have been allowed to work their own development on the big theatre of time". In course of time, he expected this synthesis to envelop the whole world.

Silent, sustained, constructive work for the improvement of the moral and material condition of the people was as dear to Gandhi as it was to Ranade. This constituted an all-time programme for both of them. Gandhi called it a constructive programme which touched all aspects of life of every citizen. The items of his constructive programme were once enumerated by him as (1) internal-communal unity (2) removal of untouchability (3) prohibition (4) production and wearing of hand-spun and handwoven cloth by every man and woman (5) promotion of other village industries (6) basic education (7) education of adults (8) village sanitation (9) service of backward tribes (10) uplift of women (11) education in hygiene and health (12) propagation of the Rashtrabhasha i.e., Hindustani (13) promotion of one's own language (14) working for economic equality (15) organisation of Kisans (16) organisation of industrial workers (17) organisation of students (18) nature cure and (19) *goseva* i.e., promotion of India's cattle wealth, including sheep and goats.

It would be seen that most of these items were found in Ranade's social reform programme also because, like Gandhi, he believed in all-sided development of society, raising of the whole man to his full stature. Gandhi's merit lay in the fact, as distinguished from all others, that he formulated a programme of action, started organisations for the same and attracted a number of eminent as well as ordinary men to follow that programme. The efforts of



Ranade and all the other saints and men of God who went before him were feeble and confined to an expression of pious wishes, more or less. Gandhi was a tremendous organiser and as such excelled every other humanitarian or benefactor of humanity. After the attainment of freedom he found that most of his immediate followers were more concerned with seizing political power and therefore the constructive programme was in danger of being relegated to a secondary place. So, he, on the eve of his death, wanted the disbandment of the Indian National Congress and its flowering into a Lok Seva Sangh for pursuing that programme independently of political authority and power. He was for ever wedded to non-violence and use of force had no place in his scheme for working out the ideal of human brotherhood.

Had Ranade lived long enough and opportunity for closer contacts with him been vouchsafed to Gandhi, they would certainly have found that they were kindred souls such as no two other persons had ever been. But that was not to be. Gandhi once defined his mission in the following words : “ My mission is not merely brotherhood of Indian humanity. My mission is not merely freedom of India, though today it undoubtedly engrosses practically the whole of my life and the whole of my time. But through realisation of freedom of India I hope to realise and carry on the mission of the brotherhood of man. My patriotism is not an exclusive thing. It is all-embracing and I should reject that patriotism which sought to mount upon the distress or the exploitation of other nationalities. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not always, in every case without exception, consistent with the broadest good of humanity at large.”

Ranade would have endorsed every word of this declaration whole-heartedly.

## XVI

### TWO TYPICAL TRIBUTES

POSTHUMOUS TRIBUTES paid to Ranade have been numerous, various and glorious. After going through a number of such homages, it was not found quite easy to choose only one from among them as the best. However, the author made up his mind, after exercising all the judicious equanimity he was capable of, in favour of the artistic and spicy tribute that Sastri paid to him on the occasion of Ranade's birth centenary in 1942 at a celebration in Bombay. Another tribute comes very close to Sastri's in point of proper assessment and judicious approach and that is the one that the late Rao Bahadur G. V. Joshi accorded to Ranade in 1906 on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of his death. There is no doubt, however, that the sly, subtle humour and the subdued wit which characterise Sastri's performance weigh heavily in his favour as against the directness and serenity of Joshi's. Since both the addresses are very helpful to capture the elusive mystery of Ranade's greatness and goodness, they are reproduced here in full.

Sastri spoke as follows :

“ Speaking once about Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ranade expressed the view that in the case of gods and saints or *rishis* we celebrate their birthdays, while in the case of men we celebrate the anniversaries of their death. He proceeded to justify this distinction on the ground that men's greatness is not fully proven until the last moment. The time of passing away therefore acquires supreme significance and needs commemoration. Till last year the anniversary of Ranade's death was celebrated in Maharashtra. This year, when the day came round, you decided to let it pass in order that two days later you may celebrate the centenary of his birth with solemnity. By this change Ranade takes rank hereafter with Sankara, Ramanuja and teachers of like calibre, whom popular



acclaim has enrolled among those to whom Jayantis are appropriate but not Shradhas. This elevation to sanctity of a dead person is attended in the Roman Catholic Church with formalities calculated to examine and publish the grounds on which it is based. The world is thus furnished with the credentials of the new saint. The proposal is registered before a Congregation of Cardinals, and in the manner of judges trying an important suit, they proceed to hear arguments, on both sides. The objections to the proposals are first stated by an officer called *Advocatus Diaboli* or Devil's Advocate, who tries to make out that the person on whose behalf the honours of sainthood are solicited is not worthy of them. The Congregation of Rites next hears the *Advocatus Dei* or God's Advocate, who answers the objections and maintains that the proposed elevation or canonisation, as it is called, is fully deserved by the character and pious acts of the candidate, if a dead person can be so called. Ranade's life has been scrutinised over and over again these forty years. Its lights and shadows are known to the last point of minuteness. No fresh evidence or consideration need be waited for. The public, though not assembled in solemn congregation or invested with Papal authority, may well proceed to affirm that Ranade will be gathered unto the brotherhood of saints and prophets of Maharashtra, whose names and deeds he has made immortal. Shall we at this gathering imagine ourselves clothed for a brief hour with the dignity of a Court of Cardinals? Application having been made to Our Eminences that henceforth the 18th of January every year be consecrated as a day of Ranade Jayanti, let us give audience now to the opposing pleader. There he stands in his sable gown, with voice and accent befitting its dignity and betraying no premonition of coming defeat.

“The man whom Your Eminences are requested to canonise is no ordinary man. I am not concerned to deny him some good qualities and some good deeds. It is enough for my purpose to show that this character is disfigured by some serious defects and that certain of his deeds fall short greatly of the standard that should be reached by a brave and unselfish servant of God. For many years he advocated the remarriage of girl widows in his community; but when his wife died and he had an opportunity of acting up to his precept, he took a maid of tender years and sheltered himself behind the command of his father. Having taken

tea at the table of European missionaries along with other Hindu reformers, he bowed his head to orthodoxy and underwent *prayaschitta* or penance, leaving his companions in the lurch. Professing to hate idolatry, he would visit temples and discourse to casual crowds on the comparatively refined theism of which he was an avowed adherent, thus proving himself a latitudinarian. He had the dirty habit of taking snuff and was, besides, so shabbily dressed that he shocked European observers by the frayed shirt that peeped through his sleeves and the shortness of his trousers. Though endowed with a fine physique, he never kept it up to the mark by regular exercise, but allowed his health to deteriorate; and, as he at the same time worked hard and incessantly, he is believed to have shortened his life. He presented to friends and visitors a stern and gloomy aspect and, being devoid of light or amusing talk, was by no means, a pleasant companion. Even at dinner he would start serious topics and ply his guests with hard questions about social and economic conditions in their neighbourhood. While walking, he would fall into moods of meditation and take no note of his companions or surroundings. When he wished to be rid of an unwelcome visitor, he resorted to the harsh expedient of setting him a literary task, such as summarising a dry Government report, and the unfortunate party could not appear again before him. These counts may appear slight in an indictment on this occasion, but they are evidences of an unsociable temper, which must have prevented Ranade from being a centre of cheerfulness and fellowship. In fact his sensibility seems to have been below par. Seldom moved to an outburst of anger even under provocation, or indulging in a fit of righteous or generous indignation, he seemed almost a pachyderm, and those that approached him scarcely felt the warmth of sympathy or intimate fellow-feeling. In his attitude to money he made no attempt to reach the ideal of indifference prescribed by the requirements of scripture, *समलोष्टमकाञ्चनः* which means "regarding gold and rubbish alike," but he was known to measure his charities and gifts with excessive nicety of calculation. Another ethical precept too he practised with an odd inversion of emphasis, *तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी* instead of remaining unaffected by praise or blame he would be impatient when praise was sounded in his ear, but greedily listen to blame, saying he must profit by it to the extent that it was just. An admiring friend once used this quaint phraseology in putting a favourable



gloss on Ranade's inability to enter readily into the feelings of fellow-creatures : ' He loved humanity at large, and men in units did not interest him so largely '. How could a man with so many oddities and crudities win the affection of those around him? To be admitted into the blessed fraternity of saints, one must have had more attractive qualities and more lively sympathies than Ranade ever had. If we added together the comfort he gave to widows and orphans, the sympathy and help he extended to suffering neighbours and the tendance he bestowed on the sick and afflicted, the sum would be small indeed, considering the opportunities and the facilities with which he had been liberally endowed.

"I now take the field as God's advocate. I am upheld by the overwhelming strength of my case.

"My learned friend has made the most of a bad case. If this is all he can say, my task is easy. Ranade was not a perfect man. What man is perfect? If a man's nature were fully rounded and smooth, other people could scarcely get hold of him at any point, and every time they try to make contact with him they must turn back baffled, as from the touch of a freezing object. Don't we want our heroes to have a few human weaknesses to ensure our kinship to them? If they always did the right thing at the right time in the right way, we should suspect that they were not real, but creatures without blood, belonging to the realm of pure fancy. Ranade, I admit without hesitation, had his foibles. I am surprised my learned friend did not mention to the Court that Ranade lost one of his eyes largely through excessive reading in insufficient light and was in later years afflicted with a slight deafness. He generously forbore all allusion to the nickname of Baby Elephant, which his unusual size and awkward bearing earned him among his fellow-students. In the early days he did not join freely in sports and games but was engrossed in his studies, which had an uncommon range and made him an object of awe and wonder. His friends called him the ' enfant terrible ' of literature, with pardonable misapprehension of the phrase. Once his Principal, Sir Alexander Grant, caught him reading aloud from Alison's History of Europe, bare-headed and with legs sprawled on the table before him. Ranade should certainly have disposed of his lower limbs in less barbarous fashion and otherwise also remembered that he was not in his own private place. But if Sir Alexander himself took no notice, why need we? Certain of the shortcomings ascribed

to Ranade are only seemingly such, they are really good points for which he must be given credit. For instance, it takes a really big man to recognise that even a rustic has some knowledge and experience which might be of use to the student of village life and village economy, and Ranade was too big a man to miss an opportunity of learning something. Some play was made with his setting tasks to people in order to drive them away. Each one of us knows of one or two fussy friends who have nothing to do and just come into our working room for a chat and will take no hint that you would prefer to be alone. Ranade might make enquiries about the average rainfall of Mahabaleshwar, the number of girls' schools in the Thana District, how Sri Rama disposed of the thousand odd *astras* that he acquired in his travels, the arguments against the 'laissez faire' theory brought forward by the German economists or the exact doctrinal differences between the various branches of the Brahmo Samaj. If the visitor had nothing to say on these subjects, what was Ranade to do but to take up the latest Government report on the Police Department and ask him to come back two days later with a summary under five heads? Each was sure of a long holiday from the other. It is true Ranade showed no mercy to his body and when people spoke of his habit of industry he would say, 'Habit ! it has become a vice with me'. We all wish he had known how to relax now and then, but surely unwillingness to lose even an hour of our brief waking life is not a sin deserving to be punished. He was accused of imperfect sympathy with the wants or sufferings of individuals. It may be true of him as of many others that he loved and cared for man rather than men, but we have Gokhale's unimpeachable testimony that he was by nature kind and sympathetic. Here are his words : ' One more great quality of his I would like to mention on this occasion, and that was his readiness to help all who sought his help and especially those who were weak and oppressed. He was accessible to all — even the humblest — at all hours of the day. No one ever wrote to him without receiving a reply. He listened patiently to everyone, whether he was able to help him or not. This indeed was to him a part of his practical religion.' If his heart were difficult to touch, how could it be said of him ' There is not one man of whom our departed brother was ever heard or known to have said an unkind word ' ? He readily forgave, harboured no resentment and made no enemies, if he could help it. By his teachings from the pulpit of the Prarthana



Samaj and by his incessant social reform activities he incurred the open and unrestrained wrath of the orthodox party, but he was never known to lose his temper and return abuse for abuse. Even during the violent controversy of 1895 over the venue of the Social Reform Conference his forbearance and equanimity were exemplary. When he made his accustomed speech as President, he mentioned no names, recalled no ugly incidents, avoided all personalities and ascribed the unfortunate turn of events to the fact that in Poona, unlike other places, a variety of methods were adopted instead of one sole method. Of these different methods the one that he most approved was that of persuasion, and the one that he most discountenanced was that of rebellion. To many ardent spirits what they called progress was God's own work, and those that obstructed it were like *rahksasas* whom it was a merit to condemn and destroy. They delighted in war against orthodoxy and thought nothing of separating themselves and forming a distinct group of their own. Social affinities and family ties were consumed by the fire of conviction, and many a young man fancied that, by disregarding parental authority when he heard the call, he was testifying to the sovereign power of social reform. Ranade pointed out that the Brahmo Samaj in Bengal and the Arya Samaj in the Punjab, which chose this heroic path, had come to a stand-still when the first momentum was exhausted. His own method was to reason, to expostulate and to allure to brighter worlds. The movement would necessarily be slow, but it would be sure and carry forward the whole community. He never forgot, and would never let others forget, that reform was for all and not merely for a few. When compelled by adverse circumstances to halt he was content to do so, hoping that the next step would be firmer, and longer. A few years later this method of persuasion found a powerful and eloquent exponent in Prof. M. Rangacharya of Madras, who described it as 'conciliatory co-ordination'. This high-sounding name did not please the ear of Mr. K. Natarajan in Bombay. He was a little more combative in those young days than he is now and called it one of the Professor's characteristic orotundities. At bottom Ranade's heart was gentle and peace-loving. His father was apparently a tyrant and made no attempt to understand Ranade's progressive spirit or his zeal for reform. Occasionally he appears to have adopted questionable tactics to keep Ranade from moving forward, Ranade no doubt struggled

and struggled hard, but would not break up his home and go his own way. Many of his friends lamented his failure as an apostasy. But enough has been said to convince those who can judge with charity that Ranade's principle of carrying the community along was the mainspring of his action, and not merely the fear of his father's extreme displeasure. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, who was close to Ranade in the work of reform, said of him : ' The idea of displeasing anybody was too much for him, and he wanted all to unite and work together. He erred because his soul was gentle, his heart charitable.' My learned friend on the other side adopted without reserve or qualification the verdict which the prejudice and passion of the time delivered against Ranade. I have not the hardihood to assert that Ranade was wholly right. But it is safe to assume that, where a complicated question of principle was involved, a man of the moral stature of Ranade struck the balance true and fair and did not allow mere expediency or cowardice to determine his conduct.

" Ranade was cast in a big mould in body and in mind. He was a giant. His studies had amplitude and depth far beyond the common. History, politics, economics, blue books, Sanskrit literature and Marathi literature, these and similar subjects made up his gargantuan fare. His knowledge and experience in the official and non-official sphere were at the service of a patriotism, fervent and sleepless, which comprehended all the sections and elements of our population. Like a true *rishi* he had toleration and mercy for all and planned and laboured for all alike. His Marathi sermons are considered by competent judges to constitute a valuable and inspiring course in the doctrine and practice of theism. He rehabilitated the character of Shivaji and the empire that he founded. Of Indian economics he laid the ground-work, showing how the maxims and principles of English writers would not apply to the conditions of our country unless corrected in great part by the writings of German authorities on the subject. He took a leading part in the growth of the Indian Economic Conference, studied the conditions of agriculture and the peasantry in their various phases and became an unequalled authority on questions of land revenue, land tenure and land improvement. On Indian Finance his views commanded equal attention and equal respect with those of Dadabhai Naoroji. His close study of constitutional and administrative problems of India and other countries was laid



under contribution by the organisers and leaders of the Indian National Congress, and it is well known that his advice and guidance were at the disposal of the Subjects Committee wherever it met year after year. The Indian Social Conference was founded by him in 1897, and at every subsequent meeting of that body during the next 13 years he presided and delivered addresses replete with wisdom, comprehension and insight. His mind was also devoted to problems of Indian education, and his membership of the University governing bodies was signalised by unremitting efforts on behalf of the Marathi language and literature and of the health and longevity of Bombay graduates. In all departments of national endeavour and uplift he was a pioneer, and it would be the bare truth to say of him that he was the most considerable and influential among the builders of Modern India. He himself once enumerated the elements that go to the making of a great man — ‘earnestness of purpose, sincerity in action, originality, imagination and above all, the power of magnetism — we might call it vital or spiritual magnetism’. These he possessed in rich measure. Add to them the achievements catalogued above, and you have a record of greatness so imposing that a teacher or *rishi* of old may be proud to call it his own. The name *rishi* was in his judgment so exalted in import that, when he desired to pay anyone the highest honour for character, he applied the name to him. More than once in his speeches we see Mr. N. M. Parmanand described as ‘our political *rishi*’. Why, Ranade himself was deserving of the title in the eyes of many of his contemporaries. It was surely nothing uncommon in his life as well as afterwards for his admirers to speak of him as the modern *rishi*. A scene vividly comes to my mind when this happened in my hearing. Some time after I joined the Servants of India Society, Principal F. W. Bain lectured in the Small Hall of Poona, and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta took the chair for him. Mr. Bain, the crusted Tory that he was, made some remark deprecatory of the general character of our people or of some particular movement of the time, I forget which. Sir Pherozeshah at the end of the meeting castigated him in vigorous phrases and with emphatic gestures, which were greeted with rounds of applause. But the applause rang louder than ever when he cited for authority ‘the late M. G. Ranade, the modern *rishi*’. The order of *rishis* exercised a powerful fascination over Ranade’s mind. In the hierarchy of homage he would accord them the throne of

eminence. In the address called Vasishtha and Visvamitra, the last in the great series (which Gokhale had to read for him in Lahore) the concluding passage is a paean to the glory of these semi-divine teachers and a devout wish that their line may be continued without end. It is my proud office today to plead that Ranade be admitted to this Holy Order and that this celebration be the first of a succession in future which will redound to the benefit of posterity as well as to the fame of the man who came into the world a hundred years ago to-day.

“My task is not complete. I have yet to make out that, if our latest Acharya had wisdom pure and undefiled, he had also a tongue, eloquent and commanding, with which to proclaim it. There must be a good few here who have sat at his feet more than once and heard his discourses. That good fortune came to me only once. The scene was in Anderson Hall, Madras, and the time was an evening of December 1898. A great crowd waited expectantly to hear Ranade on ‘Southern India a hundred years ago’. We felt surprise without a touch of admiration, as a big figure moved forward with slow deliberate steps. As the lineaments became clear, a faint feeling of disappointment rose in our breasts, but we kept it under as somewhat premature. But in a few seconds the figure pulled a kerchief, coloured as I remember, and applied it to the nose which was running and made strange noises. The opening words did nothing to reassure us, and as the handkerchief and the nose persisted in their joint activities, our spirits sank within us. Whispers of dissatisfaction and poutings of lips went round, but scarcely relieved our feelings. Soon, however, things seemed to change. One good remark caught our attention, we strained our ears. Lo, and behold ! the handkerchief went back to the pocket, the voice gained distinctness, the sentiments captured our fancy, and as if by magic the face became bright with intelligence. Half a dozen sentences, and our eyes were fixed on the speaker. Thereafter all through the speech he held us as in a spell. I thought I was listening to a superior being, all aglow with wisdom which seemed a part of him,— so easily, so naturally, so unostentatiously did it keep flowing into me. There was pin-drop silence in the hall, I don’t think the audience laughed or cheered once. If they did, I didn’t hear it.

“The published speeches have solidity and mental nutriment which are astonishing. One may go again and again to them with profit.



Sir Narayan Chandavarkar's eulogy is not overdone. 'Those weighty and eloquent annual addresses, wise with the wisdom of the heart, powerful with all the power of his great intellect, majestic with the majesty of his lofty and commanding personality.' There is no art either in the sentences or in their grouping. You don't come across a light, humorous remark; no passing allusion to the trivialities of thought or gossip. The nearest he comes to a joke is when he asks : ' Shall we revive the old habits of our people when the most sacred of our caste indulged in all the abominations, as we now understand them, of animal food and drink which exhausted every section of our country's Zoology and Botany?' The nearest he comes to impatience or indignation is in this passage : ' If we were stronger and more manly, more prudent, more abstemious and more thoughtful, millions would not live and breed as if they were members of the brute creation, and not men and women made in the image of God for a higher purpose than to live and die like the butterflies '. The joke and the indignation are alike grim. As you read through, you seem to see Ranade slowly assembling the details from one quarter and from another, inviting your gaze to the accumulation, and slowly and patiently leading you to a realization of your duties and prospects. The style is by no means varied, picturesque or pleasing. But it is weighty without being ponderous; profound without being mystic; edifying without being homiletic. One reader complains that Ranade has no partiality for Anglo-Saxon. Another grumbles that grammar and idiom do not get the respect due to them. A third is saddened by the frequent inelegances and solecisms. But all are subdued to attention by the dignity of the diction and the high level on which the argument moves without once declining on a false or discordant note. When you are lifted above the small and the grovelling, when you are freshened by the gentle breezes of the upper air, you forget the unsightly objects you have left behind and the inconveniences through which you have ascended. Or may be you feel like a tourist that has been dragged through mean lanes and pebbly tracks, and suddenly finds himself entering a stately edifice with imposing corridors and noble columns and spacious halls, the ensemble harmonising in every part and ravishing his inner soul with a beauty of proportion and symmetry of which he had never dreamed. Criticism is hushed, judgment is awed, and the only feeling left is one of joy and complete satisfaction.

To prove that I have not been indulging my imagination, I pray you to listen patiently while I read a certain passage which concludes one of his addresses. It is not the most familiar of the Ranade quotations, but it appears to have flowed without effort from the body of the discourse.

“ The chief point, however, that is to be considered in this connection is, who should be these Gurus of the future? It is with this view that I have endeavoured to place before you a brief account of the true Gurus of the past, namely the *rishis* who were both *brahmarshis* and *rajarshis*, only distinguished from one another by their individual inclinations and abilities. We must keep that ideal before us, if we mean to prove ourselves the worthy descendants of our earliest ancestors. Of course the teachings and the methods and the subjects taught in these days must be made to suit our new exigencies and environments, but the spirit animating the teachings must be the same as that which led the first settlers to cross the Vindhya Range, and establish their colonies in the South. By reviving our ancient traditions in this matter we may hope in the near future to instil into the minds of our young generations lessons of devotion to learning, diversities of studies and personal loyalty to the teacher, without which no system of school or college education can ever bear any fruit. This, however, is not all. In addition to these lessons, our new teachers must know how to introduce their pupils to a correct appreciation of the forces which are at work in the wider world outside, and which, in spite of temporary checks or seeming reverses, represent all that is best in human efforts for the elevation and happiness of man. Our teachers must enable their pupils to realise the dignity of man as man, to apply the necessary correctives to tendencies towards exclusiveness, which have grown in us with the growth of ages. They must see that our thoughts, our speech, our actions, are inspired by a deep love of humanity, and that our conduct and our worship are freed where necessary from the bondage of custom and made to conform as far as possible to the surer standard of our conscience. We must at the same time be careful that this class of teachers does not form a new order of monks. Much good, I am free to admit, has been done in the past and is being done in these days, in this as well as other countries by those who take the vow of long celibacy and who consecrate their lives to the service of man and the greater glory of our Maker. But it may be doubted how far such



men are able to realize life in all its fulness and in all its varied relations, and I think our best examples in this respect are furnished by Āgastya with his wife Lopamudra, Ātri with his wife Ānasuya, and Vasishtha with his wife Ārundhati among the ancient *rishis*, and in our own times by men like Dr. Bhandarkar on our side, Diwan Bahadur Raghunath Row in Madras, the late Keshab Chander Sen and Babu Pratap Chandra Mozumdar and Pandit Shivanath Shastri in Bengal, and Lala Hans Raj and Lala Munshi Ram in your own province. A race that can ensure a continuance of such teachers can, in my opinion, never fail, and with the teachings of such men to guide and instruct and inspire us, I, for one, am confident that the time will be hastened when we may be vouchsafed a sight of the Promised Land."

"Ever since I gave Ranade a definite place among my heroes, my heart's adoration has gone to him in fuller measure every day. Which one among his qualities grips me most? His elevation and detachment. Wordsworth's immortal line occurs to me whenever I think of him. 'His soul was like a star and dwelt apart.' True he mingled in men's affairs and strove with all his matchless strength to improve them. His life was one long and unbroken sacrifice. In a pre-eminent sense he was :

Type of the wise who soar but never roam,  
True to the kindred points of heaven and home.

Nevertheless, after his duties to the world were fully done, there remained a part of him above attachment and clear of taint. There his *bhakti* reigned alone and he kept converse with his God in his triple nature : *sat*, *chit*, and *ananda*. Where the air is serene and rare, gross beings cannot follow him. The simple but noble words of Goldsmith are the aptest I know.

As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm.  
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

Rao Bahadur Joshi said :

"This day five years ago, the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade passed away from amongst us — Ranade the good, Ranade

the selfless, — and the people mourned his death as a national loss. It was felt from one end of the country to the other that a light went out — strong, bright and pure — the radiance of a prophetic vision and beneficent purpose, and that a life ended — simple and sacred — a life of remarkable grandeur and beauty dedicated to high aims and strenuous endeavours. Five years have since rolled by — how fast time flies !— and this is the fifth anniversary of the mournful event. There is a deep solemnity in the occasion which must impress us all. It is the anniversary of the death of a great leader of commanding genius and saintly virtues, under whose banner we were so proud to march and whom we followed for so many years with a trust and faith such as but few could inspire and with a reverence which still hushes us in the presence of his memory; and we are here assembled to render homage to his departed spirit, to the cause he so long and so worthily championed, and to the eternal principles of truth and justice, freedom and equality which he made it his life's endeavour to inculcate and enforce. The day so set apart for the celebration serves to lift us for once at least in the course of the year out of the humdrum routine of daily life — its never-ending cares and concerns — to a serener height from which we may contemplate the life and life-work of our departed friend and guide, the lofty ideal for which he worked, and the lines on which he worked, and derive from such contemplation fresh inspiration and hope for the future.

“Such celebrations in honour of the departed great—the immortal dead — are among the most solemn of public functions — alike inspiring and elevating ; and the public cannot be sufficiently grateful to the Committee of the Hindu Union Club for holding this anniversary.

“The late Mr. Justice Ranade was undoubtedly one of the greatest and most representative Indians of his time. He was a distinguished scholar, a profound thinker, and a philosophical writer. As a leader of thought he had perhaps no equal. He served Government in various capacities for many years — rising from the tutorial chair at College to the Bench of the High Court, and rendered eminent services to the country. But it was as a reformer and leader of reformers that he held the commanding position he did in the public life of his country, and it was his reform work — so rich in its permanent results to the cause of national progress — which must constitute his chief title to the loving gratitude and



veneration of his countrymen. It is therefore to this side of his labours that I propose, with your permission, to address myself on the present occasion.

“In this field of effort the late Mr. Justice Ranade occupied the foremost place and enjoyed undisputed pre-eminence. India had no greater worker, no abler or more zealous champion of her cause. His splendid talents, his unrivalled attainments, his learning, his scholarship, his balanced mind, his clear judgment, his capacity for comprehensive views, his indomitable energy and his indefatigable industry marked him out as a leader of men; while his high character, his absolute honesty of purpose, his boundless patriotism, his lofty ideals, his moderation, his patience, and his exalted sense of duty — which never swerved from its task and knew no aim save that of serving his country — inspired confidence, and won for him the enthusiastic attachment and devotion of his fellow-workers and followers. For full thirty years and more, he was in the very forefront of our national life doing his work, and in his own way. And his work was unceasing — embracing in its wide range the entire field of our national activity; and it would not be too much to say that there was hardly a reform movement in the country or even a forward effort with which he did not associate himself, or which he did not in some way actively promote. Altogether during all these years, he stood on a plane of his own, unsurpassed or even unapproached in its elevation — almost in lonely grandeur — far above the vulgar tumults and the petty conflicts — the smaller passions and the meaner impulses — of the world around him — unremitting in his exertions to lift his countrymen out of their ignorant prejudices, their grovelling superstitions, and their degrading practices, to a higher platform of life. There is a moral grandeur in such an active career of public usefulness which we can only look on with admiration and wonder and which must place the illustrious worker high in the roll of glory; and his work so splendidly done is now part of our national history — a cherished possession.

“And in this connection it may be remarked that Mr. Justice Ranade did all this work not simply from patriotic motives but as religious work and with religious zeal. With him life was a duty — a holy gift of God — to be religiously employed in His service. The Hon’ble Professor Gokhale, speaking from this platform some years ago on a similar occasion, observed — ‘the first thing that

struck any one who came in contact with Mr. Ranade, as underlying all his marvellous personality, was his pure, fervent, profound patriotism'. Mr. Ranade was no doubt a most zealous and devoted patriot; he loved India with an intense and passionate love and laboured all his life for her welfare. But to my thinking he was much more than a mere patriot or nationalist. His sympathies and views were broader, and he followed a higher ideal. He was one of the most religious of men, and what most struck and impressed me during my association with him was his simple, exalted and fervent piety. He always seemed to feel that he was in the presence of the Almighty a humble servant doing his appointed task as best he could and with the light of faith that was vouchsafed to him. He viewed thieves with the eye of faith and saw God everywhere. He saw Him in Nature, in Human Life, and in Human History. He traced His hand in every movement of the grand drama of the World's life, and looked on the solemn march of events as but a fulfilment of his Providential purpose. Moreover, he was a firm believer in the moral Government of God, in the justice, beneficence and mercy of Heaven. He had, in the language of Wordsworth :

“ an assured belief  
That the procession of our fate, howe'er,  
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being  
Of infinite beneficence and power;  
Whose everlasting purposes embrace  
All accidents, converting them to good.”

“ Besides, Mr. Ranade had a profound religious conviction — a conviction based on a critical survey of History — that India was the Promised Land and that the Indian people were God's Elect — the Chosen People — marked out for special divine favour. And it was this conviction that inspired and hallowed his life-long work in her service. It supported and sustained him in his firm faith in her future, and in her high destiny, and never — not even in the darkest hour — did he despair of her. Her past and present misfortunes were to his mind only a hard course of discipline and constituted a necessary moral preparation for her destined task. And he believed that, in the fulness of time, and when the discipline was complete, she would once more be permitted, under



the Providential scheme of human evolution and progress, to resume her proper place in the van of the worlds' life, and her high task, entrusted to her. And he looked on the British connection as a Providential arrangement under which the training of the nation in the higher virtues continued under the most favourable conditions. A few quotations from his Social Conference addresses in this connection would not be without interest. Speaking at Lahore in 1893, he said :

‘ I profess implicit faith in two articles of my creed. This country of ours is the true Land of Promise. This race of ours is the Chosen Race. It is not for nothing that God has showered His choicest blessings on this ancient land of Aryavarta. We can see His hand in history.’ ‘ This history of this great country,’ he said at Allahabad, ‘ is but a fairy tale, if it does not illustrate how each invasion from abroad has tended to serve as a discipline of the chosen race and led to the gradual development of the nation to a higher level, if not of actual facts — at least of potential capabilities. The nation has never been depressed beyond hopes of recovery, but after a temporary submerging under the floods of foreign influences, has reared up its head, absorbing all that was best in the alien civilizations and polity and religions.’ And he added :

‘ Above all the countries, we inherit a civilization and a religion and a social polity which have been allowed to work their own free development in the vast theatre of time. There has been no revolution and yet the old condition of things has been tending to reform itself by the slow process of assimilation. The great religions of the world took their birth here, and now they meet again as sisters prepared to welcome a higher dispensation which will unite and vivify all. India alone among the countries of the world has been so favoured, and we may derive much strength and inward hope from such contemplation. Change for the better by slow absorption, by assimilation, not by sudden conversion or revolution, this has been the characteristic feature of our past history. We have outlived Buddhism and we conquered it by imbibing its excellences and rejecting its errors. We have outlived Mahomedan repression and have conquered it by being the better for the hard discipline in the suffering we went through under its domination.’ Speaking of Mahomedan rule at Lucknow in 1900, he said, ‘ There are those amongst us who think that this predominance has led to the decay

and corruption of the Indian character, and that the whole story of the Mahomedan ascendancy should for all practical purposes be regarded as a period of humiliation and sorrow. Such a view, however, appears to be unsupported by any correct appreciation of the forces which work for the elevation or depression of nations. It cannot be easily assumed that in God's Providence such vast multitudes as those who inhabit India were placed centuries together under the influence and restraints of alien domination, unless such influences and restraints were calculated to do lasting service in the building up of the strength and character of the people in directions in which the Indian races were most deficient. The Mahomedan contact brought about a fusion of thoughts and ideas which benefited both the communities, making the Mahomedans less bigoted and the Hindus more puritanic and more single-minded in their devotion. The work of fusion, however, was left incomplete owing to the revival of fanaticism under Aurangzeb; and in course of years, both the communities have developed weakness of a character which still need the disciplining process to be continued for a longer time under other masters. Both Hindus and Mahomedans lack many of those virtues expressed by the love of order and regulated authority. Both are wanting in the love of Municipal freedom, in the exercise of virtues necessary for civil life and in aptitudes for mechanical skill, in the love of science and research, in the love of daring and adventurous discovery, the resolution to master difficulties and in chivalrous respect for womankind. Neither the old Hindu nor the old Mahomedan civilization was in a condition to train these virtues in a way to bring up the races of India on a level with those of Western Europe. And so, the work of education had to be renewed and it has been now going on for the past century and more under Pax Britannica with results which all of us are witnesses to in ourselves. All the changes of the Past have been brought about consciously or unconsciously without any violent struggle and without breaking up the continuity of the old life. If the guiding hand of God in History has so favoured us hitherto, why should we despair now when we have been brought under influences of a still more elevating kind?'

“The late Mr. Justice Ranade was no inspired prophet or seer; but he had such faith and hope; and it was with such faith and hope that he did the work he did all his life. India was to him the promised



land of the future, destined to play a most exalted role in the world's advance; and her progress in its varying phases was a matter of supreme and vital importance not only to us but to the world. Here, under a Providential arrangement, a whole nation was placed in *statu pupillari*, subjected to a lengthened course of training in the needful virtues — in the hard school of adversity and misfortune, and surely it could not be all for nothing. If it were, the moral Government of God would be a myth, and Human History, an idle drama without meaning or moral interest. The exact function in the Providential scheme for which India was under such discipline, lay of course hidden from our view; but that there must be some such purpose in the Providential ordering of events, Mr. Ranade had not the slightest doubt. Indian reform work was thus holy work; and he exhorted the Indian workers to regard their efforts from this higher point of view and rise to the level of their duty and opportunities. The cause of India was the cause of Humanity; and service rendered to her was service rendered to Human Progress; and thus the Indian worker's mission was no mere restricted mission of a patriot or a nationalist with his horizon limited to his land of birth, but was a far higher and nobler mission — which was no less than to assist in the advancement of the whole human race. And Mr. Ranade held that whoever made the slightest move to hinder, obstruct or otherwise disturb the stately march of India's progress, offended alike against the purposes of Providence and against the highest interests of Humanity. Indeed, it was to his mind a high privilege to be permitted to labour in such a cause, and no care and no caution and no circumspection exercised and no devotion shown in the prosecution of such labours could be too great.

“It has been said that with all such views and ideas Mr. Justice Ranade did not found a party or a sect. Most certainly it was no part of his programme to attempt anything of the kind. Divisions and splits, schisms and secessions, parties and factions, this has been our most crying evil for centuries. India has suffered from this evil as no other country has suffered; and far from adding to or aggravating it, it behoves every friend and well-wisher of the country to do all in his power to reconcile the conflicts and compose the strife where it exists and to restore unity and peace to the land. In India, properly speaking, we have but one school of reform and progress, which came into existence with the labours of Raja Ram Mohan

Roy in the early years of the past century and we have no other. And it was to this school that Mr. Ranade belonged and was proud to belong. But while remaining within this party, it was Mr. Ranade's supreme effort, the one effort of his life to which he directed the full force of his mind and energy — to reconstruct it on a broader basis and through it, to unite all India in a common endeavour to overhaul and recast the entire fabric of her national life in a new and improved mould so as to bring it more into harmony with the final end to be reached and in its altered environment. All Indian reformers in Mr. Ranade's view formed one vast Brotherhood — one broad Church — with a common aim and a common programme; and there should be but one reform party in the country — with one flag, one life and one end.

“As regards reform work generally, Mr. Ranade held the view that scattered, local, isolated efforts, however useful each in its own way, would not of themselves suffice and besides involved waste of energy for want of inter-connection. The work would be more effective if it proceeded in a more systematic way and on more extended lines. Every department of the national life of the country needed upheaval and change, religious no less than social and social no less than political, and the old underlying order of ideas must give place to a new and healthier one. Political, social, religious, industrial reforms, — all these and like movements — represented so many necessary sides of a grander movement, and being essentially interdependent, ought to proceed on converging lines of advance mutually supporting and supported. And he considered that these various efforts and movements required to be re-organised and co-ordinated under a higher scheme of work.

“Accordingly Mr. Justice Ranade's reform work extended to every part of the national field and it lay on three distinct lines, and may be thus summed up :

- (1) Re-organisation of reform effort;
- (2) Co-ordination of the various reform movements; and
- (3) Direct reform work.

“(1) As regards re-organisation of reform efforts, it was laborious work, but presented no insuperable difficulty. The necessity for such re-organisation was generally recognised, and there was all over the country more or less a strong tendency to consolidation



and unity. The work had only to be taken in hand in a proper spirit, and vigorously pushed on. The Indian National Congress was the first central organisation of the kind so built up with a view to focusing and systematising political efforts ; and it is well-known that Mr. Justice Ranade had a prominent share in the work. The social reform movements were similarly consolidated a little later and the Indian Social Conference was almost entirely Mr. Ranade's work. So, again, the Industrial Conference recently held at Benares was practically the realisation of his idea.

“(2) Next as to co-ordination work, — the work of co-ordinating the various reform movements — the task was one of formidable difficulty. The inter-dependence of the various lines of reform was not so obvious; and workers and working associations in the country could not easily be brought to see eye to eye on the point. Those who went in heartily for political change could not be persuaded of the necessity or desirability of the vast social changes which were advocated. Nor was it very clear what inter-independence there could be between these and the industrial revival the country required. Mr. Justice Ranade, however, stuck fast to his colours, and did his best to bring his countrymen to recognise the justice and reasonableness of his view as to the inter-dependence of the various movements of reform; and if he did not succeed in the matter, it was not due to any lack of earnestness or zeal in his advocacy. The whole position was elaborated, argued and re-argued, in a series of inaugural addresses which he delivered at the various meetings of the Indian Social Conference; and these addresses develop a theory and a scheme of Indian reform, which leave nothing to be desired in point of comprehensiveness.

“All that Mr. Ranade was able to do in this direction — and it was no inconsiderable achievement — was to give the Reform party in India :

- (1) A new hope,
- (2) A clearly enunciated doctrine,
- (3) A higher ideal of national elevation, and
- (4) An extended programme.

“(1) As to the new hope, it rested as remarked before on the idea that India was the coming Promised Land of the future, and constituted practically a new gospel for the Reform party. India

— ancient India, the land of the *rishis* and the *acharyas*, of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagwatgita* — was one of the most progressive countries of the world, fulfilling a grand role in the vanguard of human advance. Since then, however, there has been a seeming retrogression and the period has been to us a prolonged period of trial and training — a necessary probation. The probation over and the needful discipline completed, History warrants the anticipation that the country would once more be in her old place amongst the nations of the world, and entrusted with even a higher task than in a former age.

“(2) As regards the doctrine of reform, it was no new doctrine that Mr. Ranade preached, but it received at his hands a clearer definition and a more emphatic enunciation. What India required under modern conditions was, he held, a comprehensive reform, not a mere revival or a revolutionary change, but a thorough remoulding of the entire life of the nation. The old moulds have outlived their usefulness and would no longer do.

“In an old country like ours where even with our chequered history we have had our periods of normal growth and progress, there must necessarily be many things which deserve to be revived — such for instance, as the free social polity of the Vedic times, the purer theism of the *Upanishads*, the lofty morality of the *Bhagwatgita*, the ancient rules regarding education and marriage, etc. etc. But taking things as a whole, Mr. Justice Ranade did not think that the plan of revival would suit us or work out our salvation. The old usages and customs long since discarded could not well be revived, and even if revived would not well fit in with our altered environments.

“And besides, it was well worth remembering that in the case of a living organism like human society, the law that applied, was the law of growth and evolution. In politics no one would now advocate a return to the autocracies and personal despotisms of former days; nor again in the industrial sphere, would it do to stick to the old primitive methods in our attempts to improve the old or start new industries. So, too, neither in the social sphere would mere revival meet our requirements.

“Nor again could we go in for revolutionary or radical changes. The whole course of our history, Mr. Ranade held, was against such changes. During so many centuries of foreign conquests and domination, never, even once, was the continuity of our old



life broken. By assimilation and expansion we were able to adopt ourselves to our changed circumstances. Our nation had shown wonderful elasticity in the past and there was, in Mr. Ranade's opinion, no reason to fear for the future, in this regard. Besides, our past was a 'rich inheritance' and we ought not to break with it altogether. The reformer in India had not a clean slate to write on ; and his task was 'to produce the ideal out of the actual — and by the help of the actual'.

“Reform, true reform, was what we needed; and in his inaugural address at the Social Conference at Allahabad in 1892, Mr. Justice Ranade defined the new social moulding and modelling that we all desired in the interests of the progressive advancement under the changed conditions of British rule and Western contact in these terms :

‘The change which we would all seek is a change from Constraint to Freedom;

from Credulity to Faith;  
from Status to Contract;  
from Authority to Reason;  
from Unorganized to organized life;  
from Bigotry to Toleration;  
from Blind fatalism to a sense of human dignity.

‘This is’, said Mr. Ranade, ‘what I understand by social evolution both for individuals and society in this country’.

“And this is the evolution that we seek. The aim should be a freer growth for the individual, and a fuller and larger expansion and development for the nation. A social system, which tended to dwarf the individual citizen and hinder his development in various ways, weakened the vigour of the national conscience and checked the free play and access of light and movement, must end in disaster, and no nation which permitted such dwarfing and stunting of the individual would ever be able to rise to any higher level of life. The ancient societies sacrificed the individual to the State and India was no exception. As the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chandavarkar pointed out in his eloquent and thoughtful address at Benares last month, our old *rishis* and *acharyas* saw the evil and felt the necessity in their laws and injunctions of safeguarding the proper training and unfettered growth of the individual citizen. But the spirit of

their wise provisions was soon lost sight of and the tendency reasserted itself with the result that the individual citizen in India had no freedom of growth and no opportunity to rise to the full height of his stature; and the aim of social change must therefore be (said Mr. Ranade at Calcutta in 1896) to renovate, to purify and to perfect the whole man by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of duty, and developing all his powers. 'Till so renovated, purified and perfected, we can never hope to be what our ancestors once were, the chosen people to whom great tasks were allotted and by whom great deeds were performed.'

"Here it may be noted that in Mr. Ranade's view it was essential that such work of renovation and reform should extend to and embrace every branch and side of the nation's life. Political, social, religious, economic reforms all should go hand in hand, on converging lines. The goal to be reached is the same and the movement of emancipation and upheaval must be a general movement, co-ordinating and systematising and harmonising the efforts throughout the country and bringing the workers together on a common national platform.

"(3) As regards the ideal, in the same address Mr. Ranade sketched out the ideal in these eloquent words :

'With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly with all, with unclouded intellect and powers, fully cultivated, and lastly, with a love that over-leaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world and be the mistress of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the goal to be reached, this is the Promised Land'; and he added, 'Happy are they who see the distant vision, happier those who are permitted to work and clear the way on to it, happiest they who live to see it with their eyes and tread upon the holy soil once more'. On another occasion he said, 'We must all feel the dignity of our being and the high destiny of our existence, taught to love all, work with all, and feel for all'.

"(4) As regards the programme of work : Mr. Justice Ranade repeatedly pointed out the inter-connection and the inter-dependence of the various sides of the reform movement and urged the importance of a simultaneous advance all along the line. 'You cannot have (he said at Satara in 1900) a good social system when you find yourselves low in the scale of political rights; nor can you



be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economical system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideals are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economical or political spheres. This inter-dependence is not an accident, but is the law of our nature.'

"Next as to the agencies to be availed of for purposes of such works — Mr. Ranade thought that advantage should be taken of every agency available, the individual workers, the special associations, the old organisations in the country — religious and other. Mr. Justice Ranade went a step further and pleaded for State help in various directions in respect of such work. The State represents the collective strength of the community; and the late Mr. Justice Ranade saw no reason why its support and aid should be withheld from such popular efforts. The *laissez faire* theory of State functions never found favour with him; and he always looked on the state as the national organ for national purposes in cases in which individual and co-operative popular efforts were not likely to be effective. To relegate the State to the simple duty of maintaining peace and order was in his opinion to deprive the community of many of the advantages of the social union.

"Such was in broad outline what may be designated the Ranade scheme for the Reform party in India. It was a scheme, at once bold, grand and comprehensive, conceived by a master mind and as such, deserving of the best consideration the nation could give to it.

"(3) Lastly, as regards the late Mr. Justice Ranade's direct share in reform work, generally speaking, there was not a single large effort in the country in respect of which his assistance was not eagerly sought and cheerfully rendered. His advice and guidance was ever at the service of all workers in the field. Whether there was a political movement to be initiated, or a political question discussed, or whether an economic change had to be considered or some new industry started, or whether a reform meeting had to be organised or a widow-remarriage to be celebrated, he was ready to give what help it was in his power to render. Nor, while on this point, can I resist the temptation of referring to his religious Sunday discourses at the Prarthana Samaj at Poona. These discourses, it was simply a privilege to listen to; they were simple, earnest, impressive, every word instinct with lofty religious sentiment and

contained a most eloquent exposition of the higher theism he preached ; and in this, he placed himself in line with the great popular expounders of the *Bhagwat Dharma*.

“Here I would conclude.

“The Hon’ble Mr. Ranade was one of our greatest reform workers and his work was many-sided, carried on on a most comprehensive plan and along varied lines of activity, and carried on for more than thirty years, with a zeal and a devotion and a singleness of purpose which nothing could surpass. We had no grander or nobler figure in our recent history. He represented our highest ideas and our deepest aspirations ; and the principles for which he laboured — and laboured so long — must triumph in the end. There is already a general awakening throughout the country, full of hope for the future, a growing consciousness in the popular mind of a new greatness, a new national destiny, and instinctive pre-vision of the coming of a brighter era. And this is the message to us of his life-long labours, to use his own words :

‘The success already achieved warrants the expectation that if we persevere on right lines, the goal we have in view may be attained — that goal is not any particular advantage to be gained in power and wealth. It is represented by the efforts to attain it, the expansion and the elevation of the heart and the mind, which will make us stronger and braver, purer and truer men.’

“Mr. Justice Ranade is no longer amongst us, to lead and to guide; he

“lives in God  
That God, which ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element,  
To which the whole Creation moves.”

“But his life-work is there, so rich in its results, so impressive in its moral elevation — a sacred legacy — to serve as a beacon-light to inspire and cheer us on our way. Let us assimilate his principles and his teachings, let us hold communion with his blessed spirit, and learn in all humility and lowliness of heart to follow in his footsteps, and labour in the field for the glory of God and for the greater good of our Mother-country and our fellow-countrymen.



## XVII

### SOME LESS KNOWN ASPECTS

THE BEST way to learn everything about Ranade's efforts to serve his country and people is to peruse every little scrap of paper that he has left behind—his books, his addresses, his letters and the issues of the Sarvajanik Sabha journal. The last gives a full idea of the quality and quantity of work that he put in. How wide and deep his interests were and how he did not consider any little thing as unimportant could best be understood by the perusal of the issues of this journal. Some of the subjects that he treated have already been dealt with previously. Yet it would be desirable to draw attention to a few more to get more glimpses into the working of his mind. Thus if his reviews of the administrations of Sir Salar Jung, Sir T. Madhao Rao, Lord Lytton, Sir Richard Temple, Lord Reay, Sir James Fergusson and Lord Harris are perused, it is easy to get a clear picture of what he considered good administration and how far the men subjected to criticism came up to his standard.<sup>1</sup> He was, as a rule, kind and courteous but was not incapable of hitting hard when he wanted to. In such a moment he is seen as a master of restrained invective. The following passage provides us with his ideas about the qualities required in a ruler. In the Sarvajanik Sabha journal Vol. II, number 4, he writes : "Large-hearted sympathy, a generous scorn to catch sectional applause, great moderation of views, honest consistency of purpose, a firm hold of certain large lines of policy, a sense of dignity in asserting independence when great interests required the sacrifice, an even balance of mind in the presence of troubles — these are the attributes which go to make successful rulers of men. Their entire absence in the retired Governor (Sir Richard Temple) conspicuously marks him out as a costly failure, who by his self-seeking and exaggerated laudation of his own acts has

<sup>1</sup> It is reliably understood that the last three reviews were by Gokhale.

degraded the noble standard of duty in the Indian Service which scorned to flatter race pride and left its deeds to speak in glorification of the doers."

A few days later, in 1881, he issued an appeal to princes, potentates and big businessmen in which he requested them to do their duty by promoting scientific knowledge of agriculture and industries among young Indians. He wanted young Indians to be sent abroad, with the help of the rich, to learn new techniques and serve their country with the newly acquired knowledge. As usual he prepared a perfect fool-proof scheme which is contained in this appeal. It reads : "The executive Committee of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha have for many years past been anxiously concerned to find that notwithstanding the facilities of communication that have been established between India and the rest of the world, so very few of our rising generations visit foreign lands for purposes of study and the satisfaction of a healthy curiosity. Religious and social prejudices and the comparative poverty of our people will always necessarily limit such intercourse, but these causes by themselves do not afford a full explanation of the remarkable inaptitude and backwardness shown in this respect by all classes of the population. China and Japan under their own native governments have, notwithstanding their numerous disadvantages, during the past twenty years made organised efforts to send their youths to acquire knowledge at the great seminaries of learning in the west and their young men are found in every capital city of Europe and America, apprenticed to the different trades or arts and serving in the armies and navies of the great states of Europe. Every year the Governments of those countries send increasing numbers on this noble mission and the youth so trained and disciplined by actual experience are now largely employed in reviving the decaying industries and State Departments in their countries. The good that has resulted from these far-sighted efforts in those countries is simply incalculable and the contrast which these rising countries present to the helpless condition of this country is humiliating in the extreme. Year after year while our people, under the influence of peace, increase in numbers, all trading and industrial outlets are being closed against them under the stress of foreign competition and their own comparative inaptitude and absence of enterprise, while the area of available land fit for cultivation by the increasing numbers of a pauper peasantry, undisposed to



migration, is well nigh exhausted. The economical results of such a change operating all over this wide continent are of a character which cannot be contemplated without dismay and the time has surely come when those who realise the full import of this increasing helplessness should strive, ere it is too late, to stop this atrophy of the social system. Stray efforts made here and there to start joint stock cotton mills, though welcome as far as they go, cannot be said to furnish in any appreciable degree a compensating ground for consolation. These concerns, the mechanical and engineering departments of them, are entirely dependent upon imported skill for their very existence. They can never be said to have taken root in the soil till we have a race of men among ourselves fully trained to plan, establish and work every department of manufacturing and trading with efficiency and cheap native skill.

“The Government of India has been laudably anxious of late to do its best to find a local supply for the demands of stores consumed in its State Departments. Ten years ago, under the influence of a noble impulse, it initiated a scheme of nine Government scholarships for those who ventured to go out of their country to acquire superior qualifications. For one reason or another, the scheme was, however, not allowed a fair experiment and it collapsed under adverse influences. The success, however, of similar measures undertaken by China and Japan recommend the wisdom of this policy and though it may be impossible to persuade the Government of India to revive the scheme, there is no reason why the plan inaugurated under such auspices should not be taken up on its own independent merits by the Chiefs and enlightened ministers of our Indian States and the rich millionaires of our capital cities. Owing to the growth of liberal education, the prejudices which once rendered success hopeless, if not impossible, have now well nigh vanished and there are many young men every way qualified who are eager to go out of India on such a mission and have applied to the Committee of the Sabha for help and advice. In view of the urgent necessity of organised action in this important movement, the executive committee of the Sabha has accordingly issued this appeal and it is willing to undertake the responsibility for the successful execution of its proposals if they find general favour and support in those quarters whence it expects help and sympathy.

“1. It is proposed to send out ten Indian youths every year without distinction of creed and race to England, France, Germany,

Russia, and America, one or more to each of these countries bound by their articles to stay in those countries and study their languages and literature, their arts and manufactures, practically and on the spot for a term of three years or more, as they may be required at the instance of those who send them.

“ 2. It is estimated that each student so sent will require a sum of Rs. 3,000 a year or in all the whole batch will require a sum of Rs. 30,000 including all expenditure on outfit, voyage, and boarding and education charges.

“ 3. It is hoped that ten first class Indian States of Baroda, Gwalior, Indore, Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, Nepal, Kashmir, Jaipur and Patiala, representing all the different nationalities and provinces of India, will graciously consent to patronise one or more of such students and sanction an annual expenditure of between three and six thousand rupees on this account for a term of 15 years so as to allow the experiment a fair trial. In 15 years' time, 150 youths well qualified to take their part, in every trade and industry and serve in every Department of State, will thus return to this country at an estimated expenditure of less than five lakhs of rupees. The impetus thus given, it is expected, will either perpetuate itself or its place will be supplied by some voluntary agency at the end of that period.

“ 4. As the executive committee of the Sabha cannot count on unfailing support in every one of the quarters named above, it appeals for supplementary help to the rich millionaires of Bombay and the Zemindars of Bengal to lend their support by making up the deficient number to ten as stated above.

“ 5. The money paid to the students during their apprenticeship period will be regarded as an advance to be recovered on the return of the candidate, with nominal interest, by easy instalments, when his circumstances permit of such recovery. In this manner, it is expected that the funds will, once collected, renew themselves, year after year, after an interval of fifteen years and the investment will, to some extent, perpetuate itself without any additional charge on the patronising states or individuals.

“ 6. The patronising state or individuals will be at liberty to select their own candidates, and to dictate the choice of country and the place of study and the line of it, according to their own perception of their relative advantages and necessities and the students will be required to conform themselves to such directions and wishes.



“ 7. Every student so sent out will be bound by his articles to serve for a definite period (from 3 to 5 years) the patronising state or individual in any capacity for which his training may have qualified him and on terms which will be settled between the parties.

“ The Executive Committee of the Sabha feels great confidence that these proposals with such modifications as further discussion may suggest, will command themselves to the counsels of those states and rich patrons to whom this appeal is addressed.... A nation's destiny for good or for evil hangs on its rising generation and when the best of them are trained and qualified by a rich experience of all that is noble and powerful in the civilised world, India under such leadership will certainly be rescued from its present helplessness, a new life will beat in the old decaying members of the social body and a day will dawn, which it will be a privilege to have lived to see as it will retrieve for us our lost place in the world's great activities of thought and action.”

How particular Ranade was about his statements and what care and judicious examination was behind them may, for illustration, be studied from the correspondence between the late Mr. S. V. Athalye, a research scholar of history from Indore, and Ranade. The correspondence arose out of a paragraph on pages 96-97 devoted to the Shivaji-Afzalkhan skirmish at Pratapgarh in Ranade's *Rise of the Mahratta Power*. Athalye first wrote to Ranade as soon as he read Ranade's book.

#### Athalye's letter to Ranade

*Indore Camp, Nalekar's Wada*  
*September 21st, 1900*

To

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade,  
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

You have placed the whole of Maharashtra under the deepest obligations by publishing the First Volume of your Mahratta History. It is only when persons in your high position, will take up this much neglected subject that we shall have a reliable and

impartial history of our nation. Every time that I read your work, I read it with new interest and delight. I have, however, discovered some doubtful points in the Afzulkhan affair, which do not agree with what is generally given in our *Bakhars*. I shall, therefore, feel highly obliged to you, if you will kindly let me know what you have to say in answer to the following questions which I am obliged to ask you directly as I cannot find a satisfactory explanation of them in the account you have given of the Afzulkhan affair.

The questions which I wish to ask you, are :

(1) Who took the initiative in opening negotiations for the memorable interview — whether it was Afzulkhan or Shivaji? That is to say, who was the first to send emissaries to his opponent to ask for an interview? In either case, what authority would you quote in support of your statement? Have you written this account “from the Indian standpoint” (as you promise in your preface) or otherwise? Do you include in the word “Indian” the Mahomedans too? The contents, however, show that the word “Indian” is there restricted in sense; it appears to me, “Mahratta”. Let me know whether I am correct in interpreting you. Who are guilty of misrepresentation of facts — the Mahomedans, the Mahrattas or the Europeans?

(2) In my humble opinion, you omit to mention the fact that after he had caught Shivaji under his left arm, Afzulkhan treacherously dealt him a severe blow with a concealed dagger, a blow that would have put an end to the life of Shivaji, had he not taken the wise precaution (to guard against any treachery) to wear an armour on his body. This omission has certainly weakened Shivaji's case. It was this precaution which saved Shivaji's life. Had the blow proved effective, the world would have easily known who the real aggressor or murderer was. Sabhasad and Chitnis whom you quote, clearly mention that the first blow was dealt by Afzulkhan, and in self-defence, Shivaji was obliged to try the use of the “Wagnakh”. Was not Shivaji fully justified, if the Mahratta chroniclers are to be relied upon, in doing what any other man under the same circumstances, would have naturally done? Had you faithfully recorded this fact which is clearly mentioned by all



the Mahratta chroniclers, with the exception of the solitary instance of *Ekyannaw Kalami Bakhar* published in the *Bharata Varsha*, Shivaji's case in my humble opinion.... (The portion following this is lost).

Yours etc.

S. V. ATHALYE

### Ranade's Reply

*Bombay, Pedder Road*  
23rd Sept., 1900

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 21st was duly received. I was glad to see that you took so much interest in Mahratta History. The statement made in my para about Afzulkhan's murder, was not based on any particular section of the writers of Mahratta *Bakhars* or Mahomeddan histories. Both Mahratta *Bakhars* and Mahomeddan histories were read and considered and the conclusions were stated in the para you referred to. It does not agree with the conclusion of the *Bakhars* or Mahomeddan histories in every respect. Both sides seek to defend either Shivaji or Afzulkhan from all blame. The view I arrived at, was that both intended mischief if they could get the opportunity. Shivaji got the opportunity and effected his purpose. He had kept his men near while Afzulkhan's army was far off. Of course you and others may not agree with the view that I have stated and possibly you and others may be right as the question admits of both possibilities. Under the circumstances, it is not necessary to answer your questions in details.

Yours truly,  
M. G. Ranade

## Athalye's Second Letter

*Indore Camp, Nalekar's Wada*  
12th Oct. 1900

To

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade,  
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

Owing to illness I could not write to you earlier. I very much regret to say that the explanation you have so kindly given me of the controversial matter contained in your account of the Afzulkhan affair, has given me little satisfaction. I know that you have drawn your own conclusions, but if you had stated your conclusions without any attempt at stating the facts of the case, I should not have been emboldened to put you the questions as I did. But you have tried to state the facts — both from the Mahratta as well as the Mahomeddan standpoint and in doing so, you have, I believe, omitted one important allegation of the *Bakharkars* to whom you have referred. The omission of a sentence showing that the Khan was the first to attack Shivaji with a dagger, is very material, as it tends to weaken the Mahratta case. If you admit that the sentence is material, I do not see how it was omitted. All the *Bakharkars* are unanimous in stating that the Khan was the first to take the initiative by way of sending emissaries to Shivaji, whereas the account you have given, implies that it was Shivaji who took the measure first. Do I understand you aright? If so I hope you will let me know on what authorities you have relied. Hoping to be favoured with a reply.

Yours etc.  
S. A. ATHALYE

## Ranade Replies Again

*Bombay, Pedder Road*  
14th Oct. 1900

DEAR SIR,

Your letter was duly received. As regards the statements in the *Bakhars* to which you refer I don't think that there has been



any real omission. It is stated that the Khan seized Shivaji's neck by the left hand and drawing him to himself caught him under his left arm and that Shivaji then aimed his blow when the treachery was discovered. The use of the dagger is not mentioned, because when the hands were engaged in the way stated no dagger could be drawn. This is an obviously exaggerated statement. No two Mahratta accounts of the event exactly tally and what really occurred has to be imagined more than noted as observed facts. One story tells that ten men on each side accompanied the Khan and Shivaji, in another story the number is smaller and the names are differently given. In the recent *Bakhar* obtained from Tanjore, we find the writer saying honestly that "God alone knows what really occurred". This Tanjore narrative differs from both Sabhasad and Chitnis. As stated in my previous letter the matter is of no importance in its details of attack and repulse. It is on the previous negotiations and preparation and on the final success of one over the other, on the natural qualities of the two men, that we must depend in deciding what might really have occurred.

Yours truly,  
M. G. Ranade

That is the way Ranade carried on even private correspondence, without ever getting tired or impatient and with a view to satisfying fully every correspondent of his, if he was earnest. Generally he used to dictate his letters, but if no amanuensis was at hand he wrote them himself. Curiously enough, he did not write very legibly and it may be that because he knew this that he employed writers. The late Mr. V. M. Mahajani says in a reminiscence that one day when he was Ranade's guest, he was seated next to him for meals when three writers ready with ink and pen and paper arrived. One by one they read the letters from his mail. He dictated the replies as he was eating. In this way he disposed of about a dozen letters. When he wrote, he did not require any chair or table. He would sit with his legs folded crosswise and with paper on his left thigh, he would write with a reed pen and black country ink. His house did not have any furniture of the western type. He usually sat on a wooden swing and had as a support for his back a large cushion. Any caller could come and sit next to him

on the swing. His dress also was usually old-fashioned, although in his later years he wore trousers and boots. He was easily accessible and nobody was required to send in a visiting card. He had no particular habits or hobbies, but he took tea regularly twice a day and took snuff profusely. While writing or reading, he used to chew almonds or bits of areca-nut. He was fond of fresh or dried fruit after meals. He liked preparations made of gram flour, well-spiced and hot, in his menu. All the same he was never upset, if one or the other was not available.

Ranade could not be described as a handsome man, but with his stout, tall and massive build and an unusually big head, he presented an imposing appearance. A very high forehead and a very small nose probably made him ugly according to beauty experts. He had a fair skin and a lively expression. His upper lip and mouth were always concealed by a bushy, protruding moustache. That was the fashion of his day. He took no exercise except walking and rarely ever played a game. Study of this subject or that and discussion with friends interested in them were his recreations. Music or drama as such had no appeal for him but he appreciated the value of music as an aid to prayer and so singing was a feature of the Prarthana Samaj Services. He had terribly impaired his eyesight by reading excessively as a young man and his hearing too had become defective in his later years. But he always attracted audiences to his speeches. He had a deep, clear voice and a gift for lucid presentation but by no means was he an orator like Surendranath or Pherozeshah. There was no gesticulation or raising or lowering of voice but he maintained the same stolid attitude, one hand resting on the table and the other rubbing his right eye. Sir Stanley Reed, the well-known editor of the *Times of India* for many years, first saw him in 1897. He came out to India in that year and contributed an article entitled 'My First Year in India' to the *Times of India Annual* in 1925. Giving an interesting glimpse of Ranade in it he says : " Mr. Ranade was a man notoriously indifferent to appearances. His physique was rugged, with one drooping and watery eye. He dressed in anything, just a long black coat, frayed linen projecting from the sleeves, short ill-cut white trousers. He presided over the social conference and I can see him now as he appeared on the platform, leaning on a knotted stick, standing in silent thought for near ten minutes, completely indifferent to his audience. Then he began, slowly at first, gradually



warming to his subject and spoke for an hour and a half on the Golden Age of India. Without a note, without a pause, he poured forth a stream of learning and sound sense, holding his audience enthralled though he had none of the art of an orator. . . . It made it easy to understand the unseen influence he exercised on the best minds with which he was brought into contact.”

A study of Ranade's writings reveals that he had, as it were, deliberately banned all humour and levity in them. But it was not so in his private life. In his intimate family circle and in the company of close friends, he used to laugh to his heart's content and loud enough. Ramabai has described how he used to enjoy himself with the members of the family, when his little niece, Shanta, played tricks of mimicry on some elderly person or family friend. His conversation had always an intellectual atmosphere, whose attraction usually lay in its informative and educative character. It stemmed from his wide reading of newspapers, periodicals and books. Talking with him was illuminating for anybody and it always enriched the mind of those who had that opportunity. Conversation with him would never descend to censure of those not present, nor would he ever ascribe any base motives to the actions of others while discussing it. If any one tried to do so he was instantly pulled up and discouraged. He would open out with pleasure to anybody when he felt that the person concerned was really interested in the talk and was not a casual visitor.

Ramabai's book is most revealing in regard to Ranade's many purely personal traits. He was very tender-hearted and this expressed itself in many ways. When any one in his big household, even a servant, was ill, he would instantly take a personal interest and see that proper medical aid was given. Even when others made proper arrangements, he would make inquiries in the matter once or twice in a day, usually while taking meals. The narration by Ramabai of their anxiety when the bubonic plague first broke out in Bombay in 1896 makes pathetic if interesting reading now. Rats and mice were found coming out of the room where foodgrains were stored and from the wash-room and dying in the compound or verandahs. For some time it was not understood that this was an indication of danger, that they were victims of plague and would carry infection to human beings. But when this was known, the house they were occupying was abandoned. The family at once moved to Lonavla and afterwards

came back to a rented house at Bhandup. Several of the servants got the infection and three of them died. Ramabai had to take great care to see that he learnt as few details as possible. Before they left Bombay, their cook's son fell ill. It was plague and Ramabai at once arranged to send him to hospital. He was greatly devoted to Ranade and felt happy in being as serviceable to him as possible. Ramabai says that she broke the news to Ranade only after he was safe in Lonavla, because she was afraid that he would have been so moved by the entreaties of the boy's mother who did not want her son to be sent to hospital, that unmindful of the danger to which all would have been exposed, he would have said, "Please don't send the poor boy to hospital. Let him stay in the house; we will look after him."

A typical story of how he won over younger men of promise, even if they were his critics might be related to throw light on his tactful dealing of adverse situations. There was a public meeting in Bombay to celebrate the anniversary of the Widow Marriage Act of 1856, which was known as the Cursonadas Moolji Day. Ranade had just then come to Bombay as a High Court Judge. He was asked to preside over the meeting. Among the speakers was the late Mr. Gajanan Bhaskar Vaidya, who delivered a thundering attack on the President himself for paying only lip service to the cause of widow marriage and backing out when it came to acting according to precept. Ranade did not show the least sign of being disturbed. When as President he summed up the proceedings of the meeting he admired the courage and the spirited eloquence of Vaidya and said that the future really lay in the hands of brave men of his type. He acknowledged the weakness of the men of his generation, men like Telang and himself and so completely took the wind out of Vaidya's sails by his humility. Vaidya was surprised because he expected some defence and justification. After the meeting was over, Ranade called Vaidya near him and told him the full story of his marriage with Ramabai without any reserve and without omitting any detail and asked him to judge of his conduct just as he liked. The result was that Vaidya was completely won over.

Ranade had the habit of going to the rescue of anyone in a difficult situation, provided he felt that the case was deserving and he could be of help. During the seventies of the last century the Deccan College at Poona was a great centre of university education



where a number of the celebrities of those days were educated. The late Mr. V. B. *alias* Bhausahab Chaukar, a well-known lawyer and leader of Ahmednagar who died in 1934, was a contemporary of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Vaman Shivram Apte, Gangadhar Bhimrao Jambhekar, Daji Abaji Khare and others. He has related an interesting story, in his unpublished autobiography, of what he calls "a memorable episode in my Deccan College Career". From his narration it would appear that the young undergraduates of those days were spirited, self-respecting and self-assertive. There were two professors in the College, known as Larken and Peterson. They were not particularly competent and by their assumption of airs, they got on the nerves of the students. There was much discontent against them and it found expression in two letters published in the *Induprakash*. One was written by Daji Abaji Khare, V. B. Chaukar and L. G. Gandhe jointly and the other by G. B. Jambhekar in very eloquent English under the title 'Fools Rush in where Angels Fear to Tread'. Dr. Keilhorn was acting Principal of the College in those days. He imposed a fine of eight annas on all the eleven Senior B. A. students by way of a disciplinary measure. Of these eleven students, nine were receiving a college scholarship. In accordance with the order of the Principal, the college clerk, a Mr. Purandare, offered to pay eight annas less to these nine scholars. The scholars refused to receive their scholarships in this way. The matter was reported to the Principal. He increased the amount of fine to Rs. 5, reprimanded the students for rushing to the press with their grievances whatever they might have been. On Chaukar's representation, the Principal reduced the fine again to eight annas.

The students' grievance, however, remained unredressed. The professors were as stolidly there as before. So the students began to consider what measures they should take. They decided to go on strike and not to attend Professor Larken's lectures. Dr. Keilhorn went to the hostel and asked the boys why they were absenting from their classes. They shouted with one voice that they had complaints against the lecturers and they should be removed. He asked them first to go to their classes and then make their representation. They obeyed, but the Principal would take no immediate steps to redress their grievances and so they proceeded to consult the elderly gentlemen of the city. Khare, Gandhe and Chaukar called on the saintly doctor, the late Vinayak Ramchandra

*alias* Annasaheb Patwardhan. He counselled despatch of petitions to the Governor of Bombay and the other to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay. He drafted the petitions for the students. A copy was also sent to the Director of Public Instruction for information. The petitions were signed by a number of students of the College after their purport was fully explained to them in a meeting by Jambhekar. The late Sir Mahadeo Bhaskar Chaubal was, it may be noted, one of these agitators.

Some days later, Principal Oxenham, placed a notice on the board, asking all students of the college to gather together for a meeting on April 6, 1876. When the students gathered in their full strength, Principal Oxenham, accompanied by other professors came to the platform and read out the order of the Director of Public Instruction to the effect that the students had grossly misbehaved by insulting and offending their professors and so all the signatories to the petition from the Senior B. A. class were rusticated from the College for one year. They were also debarred from getting any scholarship, freeship or prize from the University. Eleven students were affected by this order. Students from Junior B.A. and Senior F. A. were rusticated for six months and likewise disabled. These were 33. Junior F. A. students who were 22 were only disqualified from getting scholarships, freeships and prizes. The immediate effect of this order was that the students in the hostel had to surrender their quarters. They went to say goodbye to the Principal who was very sorry to do what he had to do when the students told him that they did not know what their offence was and how they were guilty of breach of discipline. The Principal said that they ought to have gone through the proper channel. Besides they ought to understand that no Government would tolerate allegations of wasting money over incompetent teachers. Their behaviour was not defensible even if their grievance was real.

Chaukar and his friends went to stay with their friends and relatives in the city for the time being but they had to consider what further steps they had to take. They called on Shri Abasaheb Kathwate who was a Deputy Education Inspector. He heard their full story and tried to draft a petition to Government on their behalf but he was not satisfied with his own drafting. At last he suggested that there was only one person in Poona who would give them sound advice and save them from their predicament and that was Ranade. Kathwate personally took Chaukar, Jambhekar



and Apte to Ranade at his house, near the Rameshwar Temple. They found him busy writing at his desk, papers strewn about him. The purpose of the call was explained to him. Without saying anything, he began to draft a representation the very opening words of which were "We apologize". The excited boys would have none of an apology or any such thing because they remonstrated that they had committed no grievous offence. Ranade explained to them that it was not an apology for what they had demanded, but for the manner in which they had gone about the business. They ought to have gone through their Principal and that much they had to acknowledge without reserve. At last they agreed and took a fairly drafted representation to Principal Oxenham, who was pacified by its submissive tone.

Although Principal Oxenham was satisfied and sympathetic, the other Professors protested that it was no real apology at all and the allegations against them were there. The late Prof. Kero Lakshman Chhatre was one of the professors and a supporter of the students. At last by a majority vote the representation was accepted and forwarded to Government with the Principal's recommendation.

Ranade did not stop there only. He prepared another petition as from the parents and guardians of the students and requested the late Mr. K. T. Telang to submit it to the Governor-in-Council because he was in those days an additional member of the Council. He agreed to do so but developed cold feet at the eleventh hour. But Ranade was not depressed. He sent the petition by post. The Council was then sitting at Mahableshtar. The late Rao Saheb V. N. Mandlik was also a member of the Council. He was of great help. His speech on the subject was highly impressive with the result that Government agreed to remove restrictions regarding scholarships, freeships and prizes and the rustication period too was reduced to one term from one year. Ranade was silently serviceable to many private and public causes in this way.

Lord Ripon is known to have done several things that displeased the Europeans and Anglo-Indians in those days but the limit of their displeasure was reached when Sir Courtney Ilbert, a member of the Viceroy's Council, introduced a Bill to amend the Criminal Law as it then stood. Under it, only a magistrate who was a European British subject could inquire into or try a charge against a European British subject. The Presidency Magistrate was the only

exception. The result was that in the districts, a complaint against a European British subject could not be brought, if there was no magistrate there who was also a European British subject. This grave injustice was noticed as far back as 1872 when the Criminal Procedure Code was being amended and an attempt was made to remove the defect. Lord Northcote who was then Viceroy and Sir Richard Temple who later became Governor of Bombay, among others, all voted for the amendment but the other seven members of the Council voted against and the amendment was lost. But in 1882, in Lord Ripon's regime, a peculiar situation confronted an Indian member of the judiciary in Bengal. Mr. Bihari Lal Gupta who, as Presidency Magistrate at Calcutta had exercised jurisdiction over Europeans, found, on being promoted to a higher post in the districts, that he could no longer sit in judgement over Europeans and thus found himself in an inferior position in relation to his European subordinate who enjoyed that right. This was rightly considered as an extraordinary anomaly and Lord Ripon's Government invited the opinions of local Governments. They were all in favour of removing the anomaly and Sir Courtney Ilbert brought the Bill which came to be known as the Ilbert Bill which was also referred to by the Indian Press as the Liberty Bill. In the words of Badruddin Tyabji the Bill sought "to invest a very small and select number out of the ablest and the most distinguished of Indian magistrates and judges with an infinitesimal jurisdiction over the European British subject".

And yet, the Europeans and Anglo-Indians raised such a hue and cry over it as will for ever remain a disgrace in the annals of their history in India. They were bent upon not only opposing the Bill but getting rid of Ripon and Ilbert. Vulgar and filthy attacks were led against them in a section of the European-owned press. They were condemned as those who were bartering away the sacred privileges of Europeans, lowering their prestige, which for centuries they had enjoyed in the Asiatic world and loosening the very hold of England over her Indian dominion. This resentment found its echoes even in England and Dadabhai Naoroji was compelled to write to Pherozeshah Mehta from England : "The conservative papers have already commenced attacking Ripon and I have reason to believe that some attack will be made in Parliament also upon Lord Ripon's policy as radical and mischievous. It is time we showed our desire and approval of Lord Ripon's policy



in the most emphatic manner possible by praying to have more of him and strengthen the hands of those who have to defend him and I feel very strongly that it is our duty to raise a loud voice.”

Accordingly there was as much agitation in favour of the Bill as there was against it. Pherozeshah, Telang, Tyabji, Mandlik and others in Bombay, Surendranath Banarji and his colleagues in Bengal, and the other leaders in other centres of India, made strong but restrained demonstrations. This was three years before the Indian National Congress came into being. All those who participated in this movement later became leading men in the Congress. Ranade was not in the forefront like Pherozeshah, Telang or Tyabji but was wholly with them. When the agitation was over and the legislation was passed, he reviewed the agitation in the *Sarvajanik Sabha Quarterly Journal*, pointing out that India's educated men would ever have to remain watchful over matters like the Ilbert Bill. He said : “The educated minority of the native population with their free press and their associations unconsciously sympathised with by the mass of their countrymen represent the soul of Indian liberalism and their strength lies in the justice of their claim. Arrayed against them are the mighty forces of the official hierarchy, supported by the non-official phalanx of their countrymen here and the great reserve of power and prejudice stored in the large vested interest of their mother country. These are the Liberal and Conservative forces at work in India.”

Ranade then went on to analyse the attitude of the governing class in India, saying : “This prejudice and aggression is the nature and besetting sin of all conquering races. The Spartan had his helot, the early Roman Patrician had his Plebian subjects, the later Roman had his Latins and Italian allies, the American and the West Indian Planter had his Negro and his Chinese settler. In our own country, the regenerate castes had the mass of aboriginal population under their foot and put them down with the severity which had reached on themselves with terrible vengeance. The British population in India has arrogated to itself the distinctive position of a superior caste and history but repeats itself in their cry for power and privilege and their contempt for the conquered and subject population.” Ranade then pleaded with his countrymen for an equalitarian basis of dealing among themselves and concluded with the prophecy that “transfer of power to Indian hands is inevitable”.

‘The guiding hand of God in history’ is a phrase that occurs quite frequently in Ranade’s writings, but perhaps he has given the idea behind it the best literary drapery while writing his article on the ‘Central Asian Question’ in January 1882 in the *Quarterly Journal* of the Sarvajanik Sabha. Such is the beginning of the article: “The cosmic forces which shape the material world into form and activity have their consequences in the political arrangements of men and determine political conditions under a stern fatal necessity which human art cannot overrule”. The conclusion also had better be recorded here in his own words which are prophetic. He says : “Asia must pass through the Caudine Forks of a surrender, temporary but complete, to the discipline of European forces if she anxiously aspires to emerge into the fulness of her own great destinies in the near future. No great civilisation had lasted long on its own indigenous resources. It is the conflict of the stronger races which leads to the survival of the best and the fittest. Russia and England and in a remote way, America and France, these are the great masters of the Asiatic, rather the world’s situation, for many hundred years yet to come and the sooner their territories come into close contiguity and are thrown into the whirlpool of national emulation in peace and war, the earlier will be the future deliverance. With the whole resources of England to back us we, as the first-born of the converted empires, must lead the van. It is the hope of final deliverance, which reconciles the millions of this land to their present situation and spurs them on to higher and nobler activities, to be prepared to take advantage of the day now drawing so near, when we shall have civilised neighbours all around our borders, and railways shall penetrate the Himalayas, the Hindukush and the Caucasus Mountains and abolish the distinction of race and civilisation which now separates Europe from Asia. This is the great moral of the Central Asian Question.”

On Ranade’s coming to Bombay as High Court Judge, the Brahmin Sabha of Bombay entertained him at a reception. The felicitations offered on the occasion by some speakers rather overemphasised his being a born Brahmin. When Ranade’s turn to reply to the speeches came, he utilised the opportunity to point out that real Brahminhood had little to do with birth. One can well show in his character the qualities of self-control, austerity, energy, purity, restraint of the senses, love for learning and teaching and several other qualities that the *Geeta* associated with what was



described as *Daivi Sampat*. The first in the list was fearlessness or *abhayam*. One not possessing these, some of these or any of these might be born of Brahmin parents but may well be a disgrace to them. Laying this down he exhorted his hosts and admirers not to look so much to a man's caste as to his qualities and do honour where it was due. Those who laid store more by his being born a Brahmin rather than his actual possession of Brahmanic qualities did not quite relish his speech as a comment on it in the *Native Opinion* in those days showed, but most considerate people admired his thesis. This reception was given to Ranade in January 1894.

Ranade's habit of looking inwards, self-introspection, was proverbial. Even while reviewing the Ilbert Bill Controversy he did not fail to point out to his compatriots their duty to the depressed and down-trodden in Hindu society. While extending support to the agitation of Indians in South Africa for equitable and fair treatment, he did not again fail to point out to Gandhi and others that Hindus in India were guilty of the same crime as the South African Whites in their treatment of the Antyajias in Hindu society. Even when occasions of personal insult to him arose, he refused to get angry as a story related once by Gokhale shows. His mind was habitually alive to all the considerations involved in a question. It was at the end of 1894 that Ranade and others were returning to Bombay from Madras after attending the Sessions of the Congress and the Social Conference when Ranade was insulted by a young European civilian at the Sholapur station, who taking advantage of Ranade's absence in a second class carriage in which Gokhale and others were travelling threw down his bedding from Ranade's seat in a first class carriage and without one word of remonstrance sat on the other seat with Dr. Bhandarkar who was then travelling with Ranade. When the hour for sleeping came Dr. Bhandarkar, as the lighter of the two, gave his own seat to Ranade.

On arriving at Poona, the Englishman, who was the then Assistant Judge, somehow came to know that the gentleman whom he had insulted was Justice Ranade and it appeared that he wanted to apologise to Ranade. Ranade, however, seeing him come towards him, simply turned his back on him and walked away. The next day Gokhale asked him if he intended to take any steps in the matter. Ranade said : "I don't believe in those things. It will only be a case of statement against statement and in any case it is not worth fighting about." Ranade further asked Gokhale,

“ Moreover, is our own conscience clear in these matters? How do we treat members of the depressed classes, our own countrymen in these days? At a time when they and we must all work hand in hand for our common country, we are not prepared to give up the privilege of our old ascendancy and we persist in keeping them downtrodden. How can we, then, with a clear conscience blame members of the ruling race, who treat us with contempt? No doubt, incidents like these are painful and humiliating and they try one’s faith sorely. But the best use to which we can put even these unpleasant incidents is to grow more earnest and persistent in the work that lies before us.”

Perhaps the last public function that Ranade performed was the unveiling of a portrait of Dadabhai Naoroji on November 24, 1900. On that occasion, he described Dadabhai as the best product of British education and added that in learning and industry, especially industry, Dadabhai had no equal. “ Englishmen should feel proud of Dadabhai as a unique figure in Indian history ” was one of his observations on the occasion. Ranade utilised the opportunity for the last time to affirm his political faith. He said : “ The era of British conquest was followed by that of consolidation. Then came the era of reconciliation and reconstruction. On what lines should the work of reconstruction be carried on by the younger generation? These are laid down in Dadabhai’s own words. The people of India should regard the existence and continuance of British dominion in that part of Asia as an unquestionable fact. That is the very foundation of the whole edifice. But there is another aspect of the problem. By reason of the conquest and of the consolidation, the people of India should be raised to a place of equality among the other nations of the earth.”

Ranade utilised this opportunity to explain that though in some quarters Dadabhai was held to have taken ‘ extreme ’ positions in such matters as the ‘ drain ’ to England, he ever stood for reconciliation between Britain and India. Any one who had studied Dadabhai’s writings and speeches, said Ranade, would aver that his characterisation as an extremist would never lessen the affection and esteem in which the people held him. In his writings as well as in his speeches, Ranade declared that there was not a single sentence or expression, even the most casual, which could be pointed out in support of the allegation that he had created a gulf which did not exist before. When Ranade died, Dadabhai sent from England a



letter of condolence to Mrs. Ramabai Ranade through Gokhale. Ramabai's reply, dated February 22, 1901 indicated the feelings of great regard in which Dadabhai was held by Ranade. Gokhale said on her behalf : " She knows what every one who stood close to Mr. Ranade knew well — that the high example set by you for single-minded devotion to the country's cause had exercised a large influence on Mr. Ranade's mind and throughout his life he used to speak of you in terms which a pupil in India uses in speaking of a teacher ".

## XVIII

### RAMABAI RANADE

SOMEONE is credited with the observation that perhaps the greatest of Ranade's achievements was Gokhale. With the same figurative propriety it could be said that an equally great achievement of his was Ramabai. It could justifiably be argued that Ramabai was even greater an achievement of his than Gokhale. The latter did not surely require as much tending or shaping as the former did. She was in his hands at the young age of 12 very much like a lump of wet clay which he turned, twisted and fashioned exactly after the pattern he had devised for her. She completely vindicated the attention he paid to her as she grew up in his constant company and her work for 23 years after Ranade's death showed that the troubles he had taken were entirely justified. Indeed the master's tuition was bettered both in the case of the disciple and the wife and their achievements were much better appreciated after Ranade's demise.

Born on January 25, 1862, Ramabai had only completed eleven years when she was married to Ranade in December 1873, when she was absolutely innocent of any of the three Rs. This is not to say that she was not initiated into what was considered essential culture for a marriageable girl in those days in an orthodox Brahmin family in Maharashtra. She had become acquainted with stories from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha* from her mother who was a devoted, patient, philanthropically-minded lady and had taught her daughter to cherish a pious and virtuous life. Ranade greatly appreciated his childwife's talents and he immediately set out to develop them to the greatest extent possible by himself taking up her early training. The reader has already had a few glimpses of their happy married life in the earlier chapters, how she became his companion, personal attendant and secretary in private as well as public work. She



resolutely fought her way out through not a little persecution by her several in-laws, without bringing her husband into conflict with them, facing all the little household troubles herself and putting up with all their pin-pricks. Ultimately she won their esteem and admiration also.

During Ranade's life-time Ramabai did not prominently attract public attention. She had completely merged her personality in his. Even after his death she called herself his mere shadow. To be of as much service to her husband and to minister as much as possible to his comforts was regarded by her as her primary duty and such public appearances as she made in meetings and gatherings were at his instance. He wanted her to take an interest in movements for the welfare of Indian women and she herself came to love that work. As N. C. Kelkar has said in his appreciation of Ramabai : " Even while Ranade lived, the people had realised Ramabai's capacity but just as the moon's cooling lustre remains unnoticed and unfelt in the proximity of the sun, so Ramabai did not catch the public eye prominently while Ranade lived. But just as the cooling moonlight is the delightful experience of the whole animate world, so for the last 23 years, Ramabai had blessed the people in Maharashtra by her benevolence and beneficence, by her exertions for the spread of education among women and by her motherly kindness to the needy and the afflicted members of her sex. The Seva Sadan is a living memorial to her incessant exertions, her cautious wisdom and her earnestness for women's education." Kelkar paid this tribute to her in the obituary he wrote in the *Kesari* of 30 April, 1924.

This Seva Sadan institution is pre-eminently Ramabai's achievement and it materialised after Ranade's death. Until Ramabai went with Ranade and his two younger brothers to Nasik in 1878 and next year to Dhulia, Ramabai's movements outside her household were necessarily restricted and were made somewhat under compulsion from her husband. But she gained freedom at Nasik and Dhulia and so gained self-confidence since then. After Ranade was again in Poona in 1881, she began to assert herself and this she did with dignity and self-composure. But she fully came into her own as the presiding lady of the Ranade household after Ranade came to Bombay in 1893 as High Court Judge. The eight years since then were the most glorious days of her life. She became well-informed and gradually gained experience. She became a mature woman

with interest in all of her husband's affairs, even if she did not fully understand the import and significance of them all. Ranade surely had reason to be certain that if anything happened to him prematurely, his wife would be well able to take care of herself and carry on his work according to her lights. Unfortunately the day came very much before anybody's normal expectation.

As must only be expected, Ramabai was immersed in grief for some time after Ranade's death. She missed him every minute of her life and she was inconsolable. She left Bombay and went to Poona to live in her own house near the Phuley Market, formerly known as Reay Market. For a year she did not move out of its four walls. But Ranade's own example of incessant industry in the spirit of a *yogi* could not keep her idle. She could not be reconciled to that kind of aimless living with Ranade's memory ever present in her heart. So she set aside her personal bereavement and resolved to dedicate her remaining years to one of the many causes that were so dear and near to her husband's heart. This was the cause of the uplift of Indian womanhood and service of the poor and the needy. She founded what was called the Hindu Ladies' Social and Literary Club in her own house in 1902. The object of this society was that women should educate themselves and devote selfless attention to the requirements of their less fortunate sisters in all possible ways, particularly in matters touching their social and religious life. In the same year, she published a Marathi book in which Ranade's religious sermons were collected. They were originally delivered from the pulpits of the Bombay and Poona Prarthana Samaj Mandirs. Ramabai's simple, homely and touching diction in her preface to this book will move the chords of any sympathetic heart even today. Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar has written a foreword to this book in which Ramabai has been mentioned as "worthy and venerable". Coming from so close and venerable a colleague of Ranade, this tribute has a significance all its own.

Although Ramabai thus set to work in a spirit of dedication, she did not yet make what may be called a public appearance till 1904. She was thus much missed in women's gatherings. In that year, she was invited to preside over the first All-India Women's Conference held in Bombay under the auspices of the Bombay Social Reform Association, the Hindu Ladies' Social Club and other bodies. Dr. Bhandarkar, Hari Narayan Apte, Dr. B. N. Bhajekar and



others lent their full support to this conference which was of an All-India character attended by delegates from all over India. It was held on December 29, 1904. In her presidential address, Ramabai gave expression to most of the ideas that she incorporated in her Seva Sadan organisation later on. She explained what new ideas were stirring the Indian women in the changed circumstances, what disabilities they were groaning under and what grievances they had against the iniquitous organisation of society. She pleaded that women must also come out in the open and undertake public and philanthropic work without neglecting their duties as mothers and wives. For that purpose she stressed the need of classes to teach domestic science, spread literacy and give lessons in taking better care of children. Her appeal was predominantly humanitarian. She pointed out that many more institutions like Prof. D. K. Karve's Poor Women's and Girls' Homes were required and popular ideas of charity had to be transformed.

From 1904 to 1924, she was closely associated with all movements of Indian women for self-expression and self-realisation and she was looked upon by the women workers all over India as a bulwark of those movements. She presided over the women's conferences at Surat in 1908, in Bombay in 1912 and at Sholapur in 1920. During this period, the Hindu Ladies' Social Clubs in Poona and Bombay made steady progress. It ran classes to spread literacy, teach needle-work and embroidery, first aid and religious education. Weekly lectures on various subjects were arranged. Grown up women and widows were encouraged to take the benefit of these services and to become self-reliant. Ramabai paid personal visits to the houses of such unfortunate women and tried to give them relief. From the ranks of such women came workers like Jankibai Bhat and Yamunabai Bhat who popularised the work of the Seva Sadan which during these years became a well-established institution in Poona and Bombay. Ramabai gave herself completely to the Seva Sadan from 1908 till her death. It was first started in Bombay with the co-operation of Byramji Malbari and Dayaram Gidumal who were among Ranade's colleagues and associates in the movement for women's uplift. Ranade had supported Malbari in the Age of Consent controversy and written a preface to Dayaram Gidumal's book *Status of Indian Women* published in 1888. They invited Ramabai to assume the presidentship of the Seva Sadan and asked her to formulate a scheme of work.

Ramabai whole-heartedly responded to this request and took up the threads of the work of the Seva Sadan in Bombay. Her position in society, in public life and her personal character went a long way in getting popular and Government recognition for this institution. It has been doing good social service to this day.

Within a year it was decided to start a branch of this Seva Sadan in Poona in consultation with Ramabai's colleagues in the Hindu Ladies' Social Club and leading citizens of Poona. Gokhale, who greatly respected her, gave full co-operation and one of the original members of the Servants of India Society, the late Mr. G. K. Deodhar, volunteered to collaborate with Ramabai to promote its work. In the beginning of 1909, Ramabai inaugurated the Seva Sadan, Poona, in her own house, the Hindu Ladies' Social Club having adopted this new child as it were. In the first year, 60 girl students received general education and 35 girls were trained in First Aid and Nursing. The first prize distribution ceremony of the Sadan was held on November 8, 1910 with Dr. Bhandarkar in the chair. He paid a tribute to Ramabai's direct supervision of the institution. Seeing this, a number of respectable families entrusted their daughters and daughters-in-law to her care. Some of these were the wives of young men who had gone abroad to qualify for the I.C.S. and similar studies. Taking into consideration the great need that existed for trained nurses and midwives in hospitals and private houses, the Seva Sadan made arrangements from 1911 to get its candidates trained in the Sassoon Hospital. During the first three years, only three girls completed this course successfully. But later their number steadily grew and an independent hostel for them had to be opened in Rasta Peth. These nurses were found most serviceable in cases of natural calamities, accidents and even in ordinary times.

In 1910, Ramabai first published in Marathi a book of her reminiscences. That book has gone through seven editions and is looked upon as a classic in the Marathi world of letters. Its Gujarati and Bengali versions also have appeared. Writing about this book in the *Times of India*, Sir Narayan Chandavarkar said : " It deserves to be welcomed especially by social reformers because it is the first book of this kind written and published by an Indian lady. I know of no other attempt made by a Hindu wife to give to the public her impressions of her husband's life and career. What adds to the value of the book is its literary talent. The language



is charming. I was almost going to say charmingly classical, because it is so simple and pure such as only a cultured woman who can know how to record her experiences and tell her story, best knows to employ."

Ramabai often undertook tours to popularise the work of the Seva Sadan and to encourage women from distant places to do similar work in the interest of their sisters. In 1912 she toured in Vidarbha, visiting Amraoti, Akola, Yeotmal and other places, addressing women's meetings there. In 1914 she went on a similar tour to Madras and Mysore. In 1912 she organised a fancy fair of the art works of women from Poona and Bombay. The collections of gate money came to about Rs. 3,500 which went to the coffers of the Seva Sadan. She received hearty co-operation in this work from the ladies of families like Chandavarkar, Jayakar, Kothare, Tata and Wadia. In 1914, a normal class to train women primary teachers was started and the number of students exceeded 200 in the Seva Sadan. Such developments were quite encouraging and Ramabai found out that her own house could not accommodate all the growing activities. So the present premises were purchased. She herself gave a donation of Rs. 5,000 towards the cost and advanced a loan of Rs. 15,000 from the Ranade Charities Trust. The Tatas, the Wadias and the Thakarseys gave large donations and the lower middle class and poor people also contributed their mite. When the present building was constructed, Ramabai had a small bungalow built for herself in the compound and she decided to give up her ancestral home and live with her hundreds of daughters of the Seva Sadan. In 1914 she made a public statement at the John Small Memorial Hall, tracing the development of the Seva Sadan during those ten years and expressed her gratitude to Providence and the people for enabling her to do her work.

From 1917 onwards, the Poona Seva Sadan ceased to be a branch of the Bombay Seva Sadan. It was registered as a separate institute. A training college of teachers for women was started under its auspices. It started a hospital and maternity home in Bombay and its branches in Satara, Sholapur and Ahmednagar in subsequent years. When Ramabai died, about 1000 girls were being educated in the Seva Sadan's Training College, Practising School, Women's classes, special English classes, High School classes, first aid and domestic science classes, music school hostel and such other departments. She was the resort of any needy and afflicted girl or woman

and came to be looked upon as a great matron. In the words of N. C. Kelkar : "Just as Poona felt orphaned when Ranade died, the women in Poona felt that their mother had left them when she died". She used to take with her some of the girls under training to the Sassoon Hospital, twice a month, inquire after the health of the in-patients, distribute fruits and books among them and thus show the girls how humanitarian work was to be done. In 1910, a fire broke out at Salumbre, near Poona, when the whole population of the village and from neighbourly villages was witnessing a dramatic performance. Hundreds of people were badly burnt and scores of them died. Ramabai joined the public relief committee that was organised and did relief work among them with a volunteer corps of the Seva Sadan. She did similar work in Gujarat, Kathiawar and Palanpur State in 1912 under the auspices of the Bombay Central Famine Relief Committee. She used to go to Alandi in person with her helpmates for the *Ashadi* and *Kartiki Ekadashi* congregations and look after the needs and comforts of women pilgrims and take care of their infants. Her example was followed by many *alumni* of the Seva Sadan in similar work all over India.

In her own personal capacity, Ramabai visited for many years the prisoners in Yeravada jail, particularly the women inmates who used to be 200 on an average. She talked to them with sympathy and kindness, read to them the literature of the saints and prayed for their reclamation and redemption. She used to provide them slates, pencils and books and induced Government to appoint teachers to make them literate. She did similar work among the inmates of the reformatory. The principle of reclaiming offenders and criminals by kindly treatment and regarding them as victims of social circumstances has now been recognised in all civilised countries but when Ramabai did work of this kind, it was a novelty.

Though Ramabai concentrated her attention on social work, she did not hesitate to take part in other activities connected with the lot of women. In 1917, heartrending accounts of the treatment of indentured labourers in Fiji reached India. The misfortunes of the women among them were particularly touching. Ramabai took a leading part in the public meetings held in Poona and Bombay to demand the abolition of the system of indentured labour and forwarded the resolutions of these meetings to the Viceroy and the Vicerene. Similarly she took a leading part in a meeting held in Poona in 1923 to protest against the inaction of



the Government of India in the matter of the humiliating treatment of Indians in Kenya. Ramabai in her indignant speech said : "I have no doubt that a Government cannot last long which encourages people to go to Kenya for the benefit of the white colonists but once they are there, they are left to their own fate and the Government does not do anything to remove their just grievances against the colonists."

Ramabai was present at the War Conference convened by Lord Willingdon from which Tilak, Kelkar, Horniman and others had to withdraw. Ramabai addressed the war conference after Tilak had left. In her speech she said : "The Government owed to the people certain duties just as the people had certain duties towards the Government. The rulers must bear this in mind, take note of the loyal sacrifice made by the people and grant them their rights."

A public meeting of the women of Poona was held in 1920 to condole the death of Tilak and over which Ramabai presided. The meeting was to be finished in two hours but so many women came forward to pay their homage to the deceased that the time was hardly sufficient. It was suggested to Ramabai that she should impose a time-limit for every speech, but she said : "Usually it becomes necessary to encourage women to come forward and speak in public. So shy they are. Now that they are volunteering to speak because of their keenly felt grief, let them speak. It does not matter if the meeting is prolonged by another hour." Ramabai also joined the memorial committee formed at that meeting as Chairman and signed a public appeal for that purpose.

The late Mr. Vithal Ramji Shinde once organised a gathering of the depressed classes. It was probably in 1911. A separate gathering of depressed class women was also held as an adjunct. Ramabai participated in the gathering and joined the inter-caste dinner also. She said that such activities were necessary in order to induce people to soften the rigours of caste. Many held such views but had not the courage of their conviction. Ramabai was not one of them.

Ramabai distinguished herself in the movement for the right to vote being granted to women. In 1919 the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms came. It was left to the Legislative Councils of the Provinces whether to extend the right of voting to women or not. It was under the leadership of Ramabai that women in Bombay secured this right for which she continuously carried on a movement from 1918

to 1923 by holding public meetings and writing in the press. The late Mr. Harilal Desai moved in the Bombay Legislative Council a resolution in favour of the extension of the suffrage to women. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, the late Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale and others supported the resolution. Three of the Government members opposed it, but since freedom of expression and the right to vote was given to Government members, Sir Henry Lawrence spoke in favour of it and referred to Ramabai in very complimentary terms. "Which of us will not welcome a woman of Ramabai's stature and attainments as member of this Council?" he asked. That evoked a spontaneous applause and the resolution was carried. Ramabai similarly exerted herself in the cause of free and compulsory primary education for girls as well as boys.

It was most gratifying to Ramabai that her husband's full biography was published about a month before she breathed her last. She was very anxious that such a book should appear. She was sorry that Gokhale who was the most qualified of all to survey Ranade's life and career was unable to accomplish that task but she did not blame him because he was too busy a publicist and for long kept indifferent health. But Prof. N. R. Phatak's effort in Marathi pleased her and in token of her appreciation of it she entertained him to a dinner and presented him with a gold ring.

Ramabai's devotion to her late husband was the same for ever. When she came to live in her new quarters in the Seva Sadan, she had a sofa kept in its hall on which an impressive portrait of Ranade was permanently installed. It was always under his eye, as it were, that she did her reading and meditation in that hall. Every morning, she bowed before the portrait, said her prayers and began her day. Most of the day's work was done in the Seva Sadan. Before going to bed, she did some religious reading, saluted the portrait and slept. She led a simple, austere life and won the esteem and respect of all.

Writing her obituary in *Young India* Mahatma Gandhi said : "The death of Ramabai Ranade is a great national loss. She was the embodiment of all that a Hindu widow could be. She was a true friend and helpmate of her illustrious husband in his life-time. After his death she chose as her life-work one of her husband's activities. Mr. Ranade was a reformer and deeply interested in the uplift of Indian womanhood. Ramabai, therefore, threw herself heart and soul into the Seva Sadan. She concentrated her whole



energy upon it. The result is that the Seva Sadan has become an institution without a second of its kind throughout all India. It educated nearly 1000 girls and women. Col. Maddock told me that it was his hospital that turned out the best and largest number of Indian nurses and all these sisters belonged to the Seva Sadan. No doubt Ramabai had in Mr. Deodhar a worker of tireless energy and great capacity for detail. But it only enhances Ramabai's merit that she had devoted and capable co-workers. The Seva Sadan will always remain a living monument to her sacred memory. I tender my humble sympathy to the deceased sister's family and her many children of the Seva Sadan."

Writing in some other connection, Gandhiji said : " I am a worshipper of a true widow like the late Mrs. Ramabai Ranade who knew what it was to be a widow ". On another occasion, he said : " I do believe that a real Hindu widow is a treasure. She is one of the gifts of Hinduism to humanity. Ramabai Ranade was such a gift. But the existence of girl widows is a blot upon Hinduism for which the existence of a Ramabai is no atonement."

## XIX

### SUMMING UP

HISTORICAL ACCIDENTS are known to have wholly or considerably changed the course of events. Among such accidents must be reckoned the one that happened to Ranade and consequently to India. Prof. N. R. Phatak, his biographer in Marathi, was led to exclaim : “ Had the order passed on him to go to Malvan, as a Subordinate Second Class Judge been enforced soon after he had taken charge of his duties at Poona in November 1871, the patriotic services that Ranade rendered to his country would have been next to impossible.” His association with Poona’s leading educated men as their mentor and monitor must be regarded as providential in the same way Ranade looked upon the Indo-British contact as providential. This accident paved the way to his being recognised and revered as the Father of Public Life not only in Maharashtra but also in other parts of the country.

To the present generation of Indians, it is somewhat intriguing that Ranade achieved this distinction even when he spent his whole life in Government service and without neglecting in the least the obligations of the high positions he held. He was essentially a man of peace and goodwill towards all and he had no ambition for personal distinction. He did not enter into competition at any time, with anybody, for anything. As Gokhale once said the first personal singular did not exist in his vocabulary. His only anxiety was to get more and more men interested in the work that he planned for them. The duties of a judicial officer, therefore, suited him best as a means of earning his livelihood. He never felt embarrassed on account of his responsibility to Government for what he was doing. He was satisfied that he was doing his duty to his countrymen and his official duties simultaneously without impairing his self-respect. The talents of such men are appreciated by the powers that be but they scarcely become their favourites.



Indeed, Ranade was even treated as a suspect not only during the days of Vasudeo Balvant's revolt, but also when the first sedition trial against Tilak was instituted in 1897 when Ranade was actually sitting on the Bench of the High Court. This did not, however, affect his well-defined and well-meditated course of conduct. He was satisfied that he was doing nothing wrong, nothing disloyal and that gave him the courage of his conviction, which never wavered through good weather and bad.

Piety and liberalism were the most pronounced factors of his complex personality which was different from that of his contemporaries as Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh, Pherozeshah Mehta, Mandlik and Telang. There was no militancy in him. Peaceful progress was his watchword and he shunned every kind of strife from the bottom of his heart. All his achievements have to be assessed within these limitations. All these men regarded the British rule as a blessing, but with certain reservations ; it was not an identical feeling. Though all of them appeared to be moderate and disciplined men, all of them were not temperamentally moderate. Some of them were capable of being indignant, resentful and assertive on occasions, but never Ranade, whether in his private dealings or public. A spirit of humility was an ever-present attribute of his. Dadabhai regarded the British contact salutary, but was unable to forget that it was after all a *fait accompli* and he could do nothing about it, but he had to submit to it and make the best of it. Pherozeshah tolerated it because he saw it as a fact of life which could not be undone. Mandlik appreciated its merits and laughed out any revolt against it as puerile. Deshmukh accepted it in a spirit of resignation, and in his heart of hearts could be traced his dissatisfaction with the new era. Telang's acceptance of it was reasoned and judicious but Ranade's vision saw God's hand in its advent and he moralised that it was a course of discipline for Indians, that they had much to learn from the British as they had to from the Muslims and so for a sufficiently long time, they must patiently learn.

All these different shades of approach were apparent not only in the field of politics but also in other spheres like social reform. Superficially, Deshmukh, Phuley, Ranade, Agarkar and Byramji Malbari were grouped together in the public mind as social reformers. But each of these was not motivated and activated alike. Different impulses would be found to have moved them on a closer and deeper

examination of their positions. Securing social justice and a compassionate deal to all human beings may be said to be their common objective. Yet it would appear that Ranade, Bhandarkar, Modak and Keshav Chandra Sen deplored more perhaps the morbid and mean practice of high Hindu philosophy, and the idolatrous, superstitious, credulous habits of the people than the inequity and inequality that prevailed in Hindu society on account of the caste-system and all that followed in its wake. Deshmukh expressed himself indignantly and scornfully against the selfish, crafty and unscrupulous practices of the Brahmin priesthood and their exploitation of the Shudras and others. Jyotiba Phule waged a relentless war against all Brahmins who tolerated and acquiesced in this Hinduism in practice. Ranade became intolerant and at least once or twice employed intemperate language against Kirtane, Agarkar and Tilak because they expressed themselves in favour of qualified idolatory or denied the relevance and importance of God in the field of social reform. Agarkar was a thoroughgoing rationalist and a radical to whom nothing was sacrosanct or unassailable. He was a sworn enemy of all humbug and pretension wherever it might be found. His expression too was vehement and even violent and not infrequently offended against what was regarded as good taste. Malbari was no doubt a humanitarian and his only motive in pleading for reform of Hindu social customs could be nothing but pity and compassion for the oppressed and afflicted, but he was considered a busybody by no less a person than Tilak because he left his own Parsi community alone and got the ear of the high dignitaries in Government circles to impose reforms on Hindus. Strikingly enough, Hume's attitude towards Malbari was similar to that of Tilak.

Of Ranade it could be said truly and with full justification that circumstances did not permit him heroic actions or, better still, he was not temperamentally so inclined, but was moulded for the role of a constructive nation-builder. Calmness and steadiness of mind which he possessed in an extraordinary measure prevented him from being exhilarated or excited and made him work patiently and unceasingly without being upset or depressed. Subjecting himself to severe discipline he developed marvellous self-control, forbearance and equanimity. No man judged himself more severely and others more charitably than Ranade. He was scarcely known to lose his temper or return abuse for abuse. He readily forgave,



harboured no resentment and made no enemies if he could help it. He chose the path of conciliatory co-operation for steady progress in all directions and mentally equipped himself for the same. As Gokhale said, "His saintly disposition, even more than his intellectual gifts, won for him the devoted admiration and attachment of large numbers of his countrymen throughout India." The normal state of his mind was, again on Gokhale's authority, one of quiet cheerfulness, arising from a consciousness of work well done and from humble faith in the purpose of Providence. "But even when he was seriously displeased with anything or disappointed with any one or suffered inwardly owing to other causes, no one, who did not know him intimately would detect any trace of that suffering on his face. And never did any one — not even those who stood nearest to him — hear him utter a word of complaint against those who might have done him personal injury." It is such a study of Ranade that made Gokhale say nearly ten years after his death, in the preface that he wrote to Ramabai's Marathi book of reminiscences : "Born a few centuries ago, Ranade would have found his place by the side of saints like Tukaram or Ekanath". He was nothing if he was not a messenger of peace. His instincts were necessarily preservative and protective. While summing up his achievements, one must not compare him with Shivaji who unsheathed his sword against the foreigner in defence of his fellowmen but with the Mahratta Saint, Damaji, who was equally loyal and simultaneously faithful to Padshah, Pandurang and People as observed by an eminent Mahratta critic, S. K. Kshirasagar, while paying his birth centenary tribute to Ranade. Ranade believed in liberty everywhere. He stood for the liberation of conscience from external authority; of the country from political and economic domination and of the intellect from prejudices and prepossessions, beliefs and superstitions. But he could not help those who held God Himself as a superstition. And all this without any trace of militancy or aggressiveness.





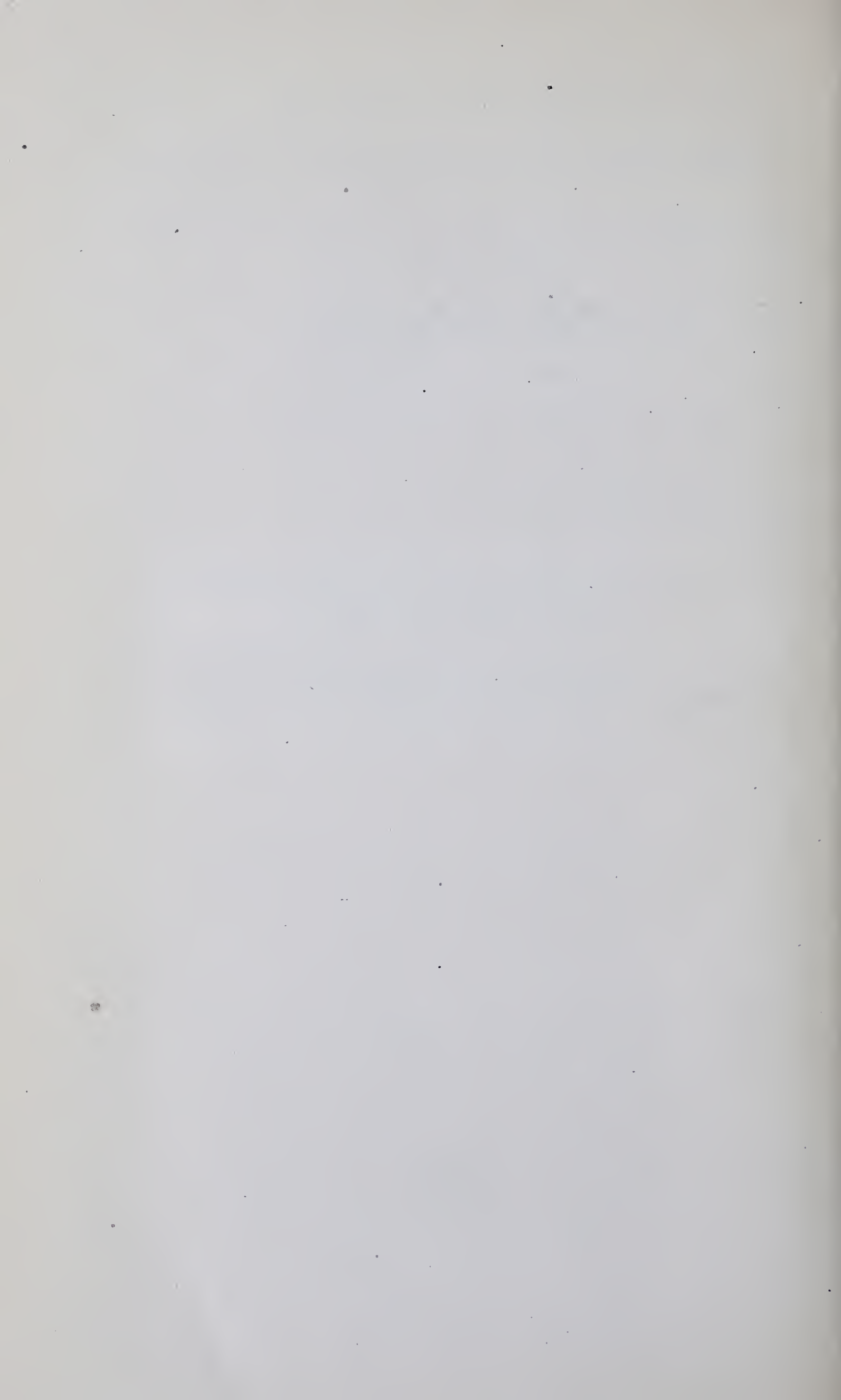
## LANDMARKS IN RANADE'S LIFE

1842, January 18	Birth of Ranade
1851 to 1856	Education at Kolhapur
1854	First marriage with Sakhubai Dandekar of Wai
1856	Admission to Elphinstone Institute, Bombay
1857	Inauguration of the University of Bombay ; Ranade gets a scholarship of Rs. 10 a month
1858	Scholarship increased to Rs. 15 and subsequently to Rs. 20
1859	One of the first Matriculates of the University of Bombay
1860-63	Junior Fellow at Elphinstone College on Rs. 60 a month
1862	Graduates with honours
1863	Double graduate ; earns a gold medal
1864	Editor of English Columns of the <i>Indu Prakash</i>
1866	Passes LL.B. with honours — eye-sight badly damaged
1866 May to 1867 November	Acting Marathi Translator in Education Department on Rs. 200 a month. During the same period served as Karbhari of Akkalkot and Nyayadhish at Kolhapur
1868	Takes up appointment as Assistant Professor of English and History in Elphinstone College on a salary of Rs. 400 a month
1869	Assistant Reporter in Bombay High Court
1871	Passes examination of Advocate. Becomes known as Prince of Graduates, having stood first in all Arts and Law Examinations ; appointed successively as Third Presidency Magistrate, Fourth Judge of Small Causes Court and Acting First Class, First Grade Judge at Poona
1872	Sarvajanik Sabha Report on Material Conditions of Maharashtra
1873 February 6	Confirmed as First Grade Sub-Judge on Rs. 800 a month
1876	First wife dies ; marries second time Yamuna Chiplunkar (Kurlekar) who became known as Ramabai Ranade
1877	Death of Ranade's father and dismantling of the Kolhapur establishment ; Revenue Manual (Editor of Fawcett Committee's Report on Indian Finance)
1878 January 9	Appointed Sadar Amin at Nasik
1878 April	<i>Sarvajanik Sabha Quarterly</i> makes its appearance. Paper on Famine Administration in Bombay Presidency
1879 May	Vishrambag and Budhwar Palaces burnt ; Revolt of Vasudeo Balwant ; Ranade transferred to Dhulia

- 1881 January 3 to March 22 Appointed Additional Presidency Magistrate, Bombay
- 1881 March 30 Appointed Sadar Amin at Poona
- 1881 August 9 Inspection duty in Poona and Satara districts under the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act
- 1884 February 27 Appointed Judge of Small Causes Court at Poona on Rs.1,000 a month
- 1885 Appointed Law Member in Bombay Legislative Council by Lord Reay
- 1886-87 Member, Finance Committee on behalf of Bombay Government
- 1887 Special Judge under the Deccan Ryots Relief Act
- 1887 February Made C.I.E.
- 1890 Industrial Association of Western India started
- 1890 March Reappointed Member of Bombay Legislative Council
- 1893 Lord Harris appoints Ranade as Member of the Council
- 1893 November 13 to 21 Poona jubilation on selection of Ranade as High Court Judge of Bombay
- 1893 November 23 Takes seat on the Bench of Bombay High Court
- 1899 *Essays on Indian Economics* published
- 1900 Publication of *Rise of the Mahratta Power*
- 1901 January 16 Death
- 1901 January 21 Remains consigned to the Prayag Sangam
- 1924 April 26 Death of Ramabai Ranade (Birth 25th January 1862)



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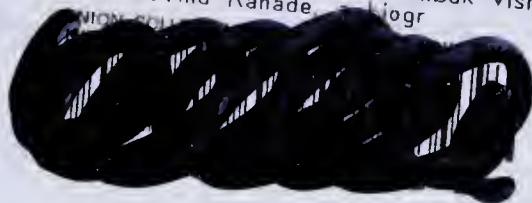






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